

THE IMPACT OF THERAPEUTIC MARITAL SEPARATION
ON SPOUSES IN PASTORAL MARRIAGE COUNSELING

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by
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This dissertation, written by

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To my wife

Bobbie

Separation--a Study in Contrasts

Oh, more depression. Hurt. A different kind of depression that I used to have before we separated . . . a deep, deep hurt that I've never known even when our baby died. I thought that death was as much a blow as you can suffer, but I was wrong . . . I didn't think I could hurt as bad as I have over this thing. One time Dr. Stevens said there are a lot of people in here that hurt worse than I do and I was outraged at his statement and I thought 'How in the hell does he know how much I hurt?'

I'm so glad I finally got the guts to leave. I'm celebrating my new freedom. The only time I feel down is when I have to deal with F____ or his family. Or mine. But I try to avoid that because that's their problem anyway.

--From the author's interviews
with two of the subjects of
this study.

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CHAPTER I

THE INVESTIGATIVE PROBLEM

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of marital separation and the difficulty in understanding and dealing with it is increasingly evident to ministers, mental health professionals, and the general populace. The purpose of the research which was done for this dissertation was to study marital separation from the perspective of pastoral marriage counseling in order to discover some of the ways in which the separation phenomenon is perceived and experienced in that context. Particular attention was given to the relation of separation to the identities and life styles of separated spouses.

II. THE APPROACH TO THE STUDY

This study has attempted exploratory and descriptive research. Its approach was to investigate and describe the experience of marital separation as perceived by persons in marriage counseling at a pastoral counseling center, and to allow conclusions and the formation of hypotheses to emerge from the study. It did not purport to test causal hypotheses nor to be of an evaluative nature.

III. THE LOGIC OF THE STUDY

Separation of spouses is generally construed as an undesirable

phenomenon:

Marriage today is characterized by increasing instability, which manifests itself in separation by mutual consent, desertion, and divorce . . . Exactly how many separations there are, no one knows, since some of these 'separations' are permanent . . . How much suffering and unhappiness are caused by desertion, separation, and divorce can be fully understood only by those involved in such situations.¹

That separation occurs regularly and that distress accompanies it is well known. However, the precise magnitude of the problem is unknown, in that accurate statistics regarding marital separations are not obtainable. Published materials are not particularly helpful. The above and following are typical of what literary references there are to marital separation:

Whether voluntary or forced by either mate, separation breaks the bond established by the couple's children, 'stretches' the bonds of opinion of friends, of the public, and of the church, while leaving the legal bond formally intact. In separation, both parents may contribute to the support of the children, but they do not cooperate in rearing them. As far as relatives, friends, the public, and church leaders are concerned, separation may only surprise and shock them. While separation is considered highly undesirable by these persons, it is still not looked upon as a divorce. There is a feeling that the couple has 'erred' but that they may come to their senses and go back together again . . .

A similar and still more deplorable way of dissolving marriage is desertion. . . .²

Other than the type of inference-laden statements cited above and others assuming separation of spouses as a prelude to divorce, there is a dearth of reference in the professional literature to marital separation. No studies have been done elucidating the results of, or

¹Jacob L. Hirning, and Alma L. Hirning, *Marriage Adjustment* (New York: American Book, 1956), pp. 5-6.

²*Ibid.*, p. 368.

what happens during, marital separation. These facts, along with the observation that the separation of spouses occurs with a fairly high degree of frequency *in the marriage counseling process*, combine to warrant the present study, to the end that something more descriptive of the phenomenon than is currently available be accessible to clergymen, mental health professionals, and research scholars.

IV. DELIMITATION

Although the purpose of the present research was to present an exploratory overview of how marital separation is perceived and experienced, it had to be narrowed in several ways in order to make the results manageable.

For the purposes of narrowing, only separated spouses were selected--not divorced persons, widowed persons, or persons living with their spouses.

Second, whether prognostic clues pointed to reconciliation or divorce as probable eventualities was not a concern of this study.

Third, only parents were interviewed.

Fourth, only spouses who professed to be separated from their mates voluntarily in the interest of intensifying their personal and interpersonal growth, were interviewed. The rationale for this criterion stems from a pilot project which attempted several interviews with persons separated from their partners unwillingly.³ It became

³John R. Landgraf, "An Enquiry into the Identity and Life Style of the Separated Spouse," (unpublished paper, Southern California

apparent to the interviewer that unresolved feelings consistently prevented such subjects from describing their separation experiences with any appreciable amount of self-responsible objectivity. It was reported that they seemed too dependent--convinced of their need for affirmation from one particular person, viz. their estranged mate--to respond to the perceptual and experiential concerns under investigation. Typically, these subjects attempted to shift the focus of the interview to accommodate their desire for crisis intervention counseling; as a result, the data-gathering process was impaired.

Finally, the subjects of this study were persons undergoing marriage counseling at Interfaith Counseling Service, a pastoral counseling center in Scottsdale, Arizona.

The research on separated spouses reported here was a study of the here-and-now rather than a retrospective or longitudinal study. Using a limited sample, it explored 23 different aspects of the separation experience of the respondents rather than focusing in depth on one aspect (e.g., changes in parental functioning, or religious activity, etc.) or employing a larger sample.

Nor was this to be a study suggestive of what the minister or mental health professional should do in caring for separated spouses. Rather, it was an exploration of how spouses under the care of a pastoral counselor experience their separation and what changes they undergo (or do not undergo) during that experience.

School of Theology at Claremont, 1971).

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS

To avoid confusion arising from varying legal, sociological, or psychological terms, and for the sake of precision, the following definitions are crucial to this study:

Marriage. An institutionalized and legalized contractual mating arrangement between a man and a woman.

Spouse. A legally married person, not necessarily living with or relating to his partner.

Marital separation. An informal separation of spouses without legal action, whether voluntary or forced by either spouse.

Separation. Marital separation.

Legal separation. A court-supervised separation of spouses with certain legal provisions for child support and custody, visiting privileges, and other pertinent details.

Therapeutic separation. A separation of marriage partners involved in ongoing relationship with a marriage counselor who functions as therapist to one or both of the spouses.

Identity. The term *identity* refers to one's self-definition, or perhaps better one's definition of his selfhood. It is (after Erikson) the continuing "I," if "I" is seen as

. . . the center of awareness in a universe of experience in which I have a coherent identity and . . . am in possession of my wits and able to say what I see and what I think.⁴

⁴Erik H. Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1968), p. 220.

Identity was elaborated in this study in terms of internal, covert behavior (e.g., perceptions, attitudes, feelings).

Life style. *Life style* refers to the form of observable behavioral acts or ways persons live their lives. It has to do with those activities a person chooses to do as an expression of his identity. While it is assumed that such life patterns are fluid and in process, the interviews for this study attempted to "snapshot" slices of that process. It is also understood that *life style* may be viewed as primarily a personal, individualistic matter. What was investigated in this research was a sample of such styles representative of an apparent social type--the therapeutically separated spouse. *Life style* was elaborated in this study in terms of observable, overt behavior (e.g., social and recreational activities).

VI. THE INVESTIGATIVE METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in the following manner:

First, a survey of literature which dealt with, or related to, marriage and/or family counseling, especially as applied to the phenomenon of marital separation, was made and discussed. Also reviewed was literature dealing with human separation in general.

Second, a sample of twenty people--ten women and ten men--was selected and interviewed. Approximately two hours was spent with each subject. An informal and open-ended style of interviewing was used, although a questionnaire was employed by the interviewer to make certain that he collected information in each category deemed crucial

(Appendix A). A constant effort was made to maintain a descriptive focus in the interviews; any tendency toward evaluative or "leading" comment was shunned. Each interview was taped and subsequently transcribed.

VII. THE REPORTING OF DATA

From the complete interview transcriptions, data was extrapolated in each of 23 categories of enquiry (Appendixes B and C). The data was compiled and presented in orderly fashion, employing both a simple descriptive statistical method of reporting and a common psychotherapeutic case study format (but void of such conjectural considerations as etiology, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment plan). In that a self-report information-gathering methodology was used, the ensuing report is inherently impressionistic, consisting of descriptions of how the separations under scrutiny were viewed and experienced.

It is unapologetically acknowledged that in the strict sense of the term, evaluation cannot be avoided (e.g., even "therapeutic" is a value-laden concept). The categories chosen for the interviews germane to this study were unavoidably reflective of what the researcher regarded as worthy of investigation, and other categories might have been selected. However, beyond the value judgments implied in selecting the areas for enquiry, no attempt was made to evaluate the therapeutic separation phenomenon--only to describe it. Both the internal dynamics of therapeutic separation (identity categories) and the observable dynamics of the phenomenon (life style categories) were

characterized from the descriptive statements of the subjects. *What* a person recounted as his experience, and *how* he depicted that experience as affecting his identity and his life style, were reported. Causes were not inferred.

VIII. SUMMARY

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the phenomenological aspects of marital separation from the perspective of pastoral marriage counseling in order to describe some of the ways in which the separation phenomenon is perceived and experienced in that context. The therapeutic separation of marriage partners occurs within the marriage counseling process with a sufficiently high degree of frequency to warrant such an exploratory study. The investigative methodology employed was an interview methodology. Resultant data was collated and reported in a descriptive, non-evaluative way by means of a simple statistical methodology, and illustrated through the use of a case study format.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE RELATED TO THE STUDY

I. INTRODUCTION

A thorough search of the literature of sociology, psychology, education, and religion evidenced a great poverty of material dealing with marital separation. No material was found that spoke directly to the phenomenon under investigation in this study, viz. the perceptual and experiential aspects of therapeutic separation of spouses while in counseling. In the past twenty-five years' listings in the periodical and journal indices, no studies that dealt directly with marital separation could be identified. In addition to these indices, the survey included careful examination of bibliographies, books on marriage, divorce, the family, single parenthood, premarital counseling, post-marital counseling, marriage and family counseling, grief, death and dying, dissertation abstracts (and a number of dissertations), sociological and psychological abstracts, and numerous articles. The lack of literature related to marital separation was revealed.

However, some relevant writings were found, including material which demonstrated the prevailing attitudes towards marital separation and literature which dealt with separation phenomena in other contexts (e.g., physical death) in a helpful way. That material was included in this chapter.

The results of the survey were sufficiently negligible with

respect to the present study to verify justification for some original descriptive research into the phenomenon of therapeutic marital separation. The present chapter attempted to summarize that which was discovered in a manner useful as a backdrop to that research.

The discussions of marital separation which were found--usually consisting of mere mention or a transition paragraph or two--occurred most frequently in the literature on divorce. That literature seemed to break down into two distinct segments, viz. pre-1945 and post-1945. Most of the writings prior to 1945 consisted of memoirs of lawyers or judges, advice of various kinds to couples in trouble with their marriages, and generalized treatment of marital problems. Literature written in response to the radical increase in divorces following World War II and up to the present day was of a different genre altogether. Highly skilled specialists in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, sociology, law, and religion have spoken to the problem of troubled marriages from their particular points of view. Most of the material used in this review of the literature was taken from post-1945 writings.

Although considerable overlap was unavoidable in the sections which follow, an arrangement was devised to deal with the survey in a structured and readable way:

Etiological Perspectives on Marital Conflict

The Field of Marriage Counseling as Related to Separation

The Church and Marital Separation or Dissolution

Phenomena of Marital Separation and Divorce

Separation in Other Contexts

II. ETIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MARITAL CONFLICT

Analyzing the causes of marital problems has interested persons in a number of professions including psychiatry, psychology, sociology, and religion. Their analyses were found to be as varied as their individual disciplinary, professional, and philosophical perspectives.

A well-known psychiatrist, Edmund Bergler, believes that problems do not lie in a marriage itself but in the mental state of the persons entering into marriage. To elaborate, he blames the so-called neurotic state of spouses as the major cause of conflict leading to separation and divorce, and contends that separation or divorce are spurious solutions to marital differences because the problems involved have a neurotic foundation.

The futility of divorce can be established clinically; the second, third, and nth marriages (are) but repetitions of previous experiences. The partner has changed--but that is the only difference. The institution of multiple marriage is a fiasco.¹

Bergler states that "two neurotics look for each other with uncanny regularity" so that many marriages are fated to fail from their very inception. His thesis that "divorce won't help" is based upon his particular analysis of such marriages which is summed up as follows:

Divorce is based on a series of illusions and fantasies. Illusion number one is the belief that the next marriage will be more successful. This belief arises from the fact that the neurotic divorcee, unaware that the failure of her marriage was inevitable, considers it to have been due simply to a mistake, to be corrected

¹Edmund Bergler, *Divorce Won't Help* (New York: Hart, 1948), p. viii.

next time. The illusion is maintained with amazing tenacity. The real reason for the failure of the marriage--the neurosis which created the failure and will continue to create new failures--is never taken into account.²

Bergler's prognosis for American marriage is very guarded, but he sees hope in the establishment of preventive counseling centers which make available to persons contemplating marriage skilled practitioners who can diagnose the problems which will undoubtedly come to light if they marry. He also urges the increase of psychiatric marriage clinics to help unhappy couples deal creatively with their marital conflicts. No mention is made of separation as having therapeutic potential in the marriage counseling process or of its frequent occurrence in that process.

As a sociologist, Gibson Winter analyzes marital problems from a different perspective than that of psychiatrists or psychologists. Viewing marriage from a familial orientation, he observes that " . . . now impoverished of many of its traditional tasks, it (the family) became the exclusive sphere of intimacy in modern life."³ He sees the chief problem in interpersonal relationships as the inability of the individual to attain a level of intimacy that is conducive to a creative marriage. Feeding into this, he contends, is the impersonal and competitive nature of the workaday world in which modern men and women must struggle. The individual is caught between his personal striving

²*Ibid.*, p. 117

³Gibson Winter, *Love and Conflict* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 9.

for closeness at home and the realities of the cutthroat business world where so large a percentage of his time and energy is spent.

Winter further states that this changing nature of societal structures contributes directly to all sorts of conflict in the home, causing confused thinking on the part of both parents and children:

Actually, the strong mother with a strong father can make a good parental contribution. But a strong mother with no real father figure, except possibly a bumbling Santa Claus who fits in like an old shoe, can make a very one-sided combination. It can develop very frustrated and angry boys. It can develop very capable but frigid women. Hence there are some who will not settle for mother rule. What other alternatives are there? We can try the rule of children. This is being experienced in many homes, where parents refuse to take the responsibility for order in their own homes. Where father's authority could be reconstructed in the democratic way, this seems to be the best alternative but it needs much more careful interpretation.⁴

With these crosscurrents at work in the home, Winter believes that the establishment of intimacy--man's desperate need in an impersonal world--is extremely difficult because of his inability to *sustain* such intimacy even though he has married as an expression of his desire for it. He marries seeking intimacy, but the ensuing intimacy of early married life is so intense and unfamiliar that neither spouse has the privacy they have come to prize. "If they do not share the same toothbrush, it is because the toothbrush is the last outpost of privacy."⁵

What follows is that this intimacy is ultimately rejected in

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 78.

any of a number of ways, the most radical of which is divorce. Winter sees it beginning with spouses simply drifting apart into a bland co-existence--living alone together, set on different paths. Eventually such partners may meet for little more than a boring meal or an argument about money. They are separated. "Such an arrangement may or not lead to divorce, but it is already a kind of spiritual divorce."⁶

What solution Winter sees lies in a correcting of those trends in family life which inevitably lead to depersonalization of relationships and the inability to sustain intimacy so that the end result is withdrawal and lack of communication.

Havemann offers another point of view. He posits two precipitating factors in marital conflict, viz. the sexual differences between men and women and the different sets of expectations which males and females bring to a marriage relationship. He states that

Almost every marriage involves a disparity of sexual tension; the husband and wife who always feel like having sexual relations at exactly the same moment are rare indeed.⁷

Havemann argues that a thorough understanding of their sexual differences will enable a couple to adjust so as to make marriage mutually satisfying, but he is critical of what he regards as an overly heavy dependence upon marriage manuals by physicians and counselors and persons entering into marriage. He fears that this practice tends to reduce sexual activity to a mechanical function which fails to speak

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁷E. Havemann, *Men, Women, and Marriage* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962), p. 30.

to the individual's continuing need for fulfillment as a whole person. If, as is often the case, the techniques advocated by the manuals are unsuccessful, deeper anxieties than are already festering may prevail:

The advice in the manuals can not only be futile but harmful. When it fails to work, as it is often bound to fail, there is grave danger that Jane Doe and John Smith will stop worrying and become panic-struck instead.⁸

Havemann's second focus is on the role expectations which are brought to the marital relationship, particularly by the husband. He elucidates three basic types of marriage role expectation laid upon the wife:

1. *The old-fashioned wife and mother.* This role centers about the expectation that the wife not participate to any appreciable extent in the decisions concerning the marriage. Her task is to function efficiently and acceptingly as a homemaker and a mother to children born of the union.
2. *The companion-wife.* This is the prototypical good sport/glamour girl role. The wife is to keep up on all current trends and be a witty conversationalist. She is also to be a good hostess.
3. *The full partner.* The wife is to be a career woman who contributes faithfully and substantially to the family income. With this role (at its best) comes the understanding that the wife has equal weight in family decision-making.

Havemann holds that a woman entering marriage must decipher which of these roles--or a variation of one of them--she is to play. If she is unaware of her husband's expectations or there is a conflicting perception of what role is to be played, there will be tension or outright conflict. If there is no problem in this regard at first, differences may develop as the preference of each spouse changes with the passage

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 38.

of time.

Havemann contends that an intelligent understanding of the nature of the three roles plus frank negotiating and contracting with respect to them prior to marriage will facilitate smoother marriage. As to marriages in trouble, he advocates open discussion centering about the role expectation and sexual difference aspects of marriage.⁹ He does not advocate separation except within the context of divorce in insoluble cases.

Lemasters, a sociological researcher, reports that in marriages which have admittedly been unhappy for ten years there inevitably are behaviors indicative of severe personal disorganization.¹⁰ This is expressed by various symptomatic manifestations such as alcoholism, extramarital affairs, psychophysiological illnesses, neurotic or psychotic behaviors, occupational disorganization, *et al.* What satisfactions are reported by the respondents in Lemasters' sample are centered in jobs, liquor, and other women (on the part of the men) and in children, religion, work, or community service (on the part of women).

Lemasters sees a characteristic evolutionary pattern in the ten-year-old marriages he studied: disenchantment because the marriage did not go as expected, attempts to "make it work," bitterness towards the other spouse's refusal to change, resignation, and the taking of steps to gain satisfaction elsewhere. It was noted that all persons

⁹Abstracted from *ibid.*, pp. 66-69.

¹⁰E. E. Lemasters, "Holy Deadlock: A Study of Unsuccessful Marriages," *Midwest Sociologist*, XXI:2 (July 1969), 90-91.

involved in Lemasters' research had consulted marriage counselors, clergymen, or psychotherapists to gain aid in establishing an adequate marriage; that was a criterion for participation in his sample. After voicing astonishment that the helping agents had not suggested separation or dissolution of such mutually destructive relationships, he concludes:

It would seem that professional practitioners working with such couples may be reflecting a cultural bias in their counseling efforts--that the function of a counselor is to keep the marriage intact no matter what the cost.¹¹

From the interviewees' standpoint, Lemasters reports, the rationales for continuing such unsatisfying marriages include the desire to stay despite the unhappinesses rather than admitting defeat, the wish to maintain a "normal" home for the sake of the children, and a pervasive hope that things might ultimately improve.

In a provocative article in a leading women's magazine, Richard Farson, a psychotherapist, posits the thesis that good marriages are more fragile in modern America than bad ones.¹² Some of his points were thoughtfully made:

1. Discontent may arise in a good marriage because mass education and the mass media have taught people to expect too much from marriage, i.e., the realization of an impossible 'ideal nuclear family.'
2. Discontent may arise because marriage now embraces an unreachable concept with respect to sexual fulfillment. The demand is that sex be ever playful, experimental, greatly permissive, etc.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹²Richard Farson, "Why Good Marriages Fail," *McCall's* (October 1971), 110-170.

3. Discontent is being fostered as a result of the gains made in the consciousness revolution, with its emphases on alternate life styles and super-sensitivity.
4. Discontent is birthed because of fantasies about what other marriages 'must be like.'
5. Discontent arises from comparing the marriage with itself in its better moments, with particular attention to pre-marital and early marriage experiences before such peaks were followed by the inevitable valleys.

Farson concludes:

. . . marriages of all kinds, good and bad, are very fragile, easily wrecked. They can withstand some kinds of difficulty and trauma, but they cannot stand the abuse of unmet expectations. They particularly can't stand comparisons between what they are and what they might be. It is that comparison that leads to separation and divorce.¹³

It was apparent from a perusal of the above and numerous other writings that no conclusive answers to the puzzling question, "Why do so many marriages fail?" were forthcoming. What was evident was the increasing interest in research into the deeper personality problems associated with the etiology of marital unhappiness, separation, and divorce, coupled with a quest for better understanding of contributive factors in the societal system and a thrust towards the development of preventive and reconciliatory tactics. Many who probed the psychological, social, cultural, and religious factors related to marriage and the family were attempting to find causative data and curative trends in the ever-changing patterns of American life. The extent to which their findings were accurate or helpful remains an unknown.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 170.

III. THE FIELD OF MARRIAGE COUNSELING AS RELATED TO SEPARATION

The literature concerned with marriage counseling was sizable, consisting of books and articles written by psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians, social workers, and clergymen. In many volumes problems centering about marital relationships were considered concisely within the context of counseling as a whole. In view of the focus of the present research, particular attention was given to the literature which included discussion of severe marital conflict in general, and marital separation in particular. While no specific approach involving therapeutic separation was found, the following highlights from the marriage counseling literature were regarded useful as background information to the data described later in this study.

One exhaustive work, a self-consciously comprehensive marriage counselor's handbook, is Carrington's.¹⁴ His contention is that as do persons, marriages can sicken and die, but the sickness and death of marriages have far more dire consequences in intrapersonal and interpersonal lives than do physical deaths: sick marriages contribute to vandalism, alcoholism, accidents of various kinds, mental-emotional illness, etc.

Nonetheless, Carrington's prognosis for marriage counseling is a strongly positive one; he believes that sick marriages may be healed and that untold tragedies may be prevented through the skillful

¹⁴William L. Carrington, *The Healing of Marriage* (New York: Channel Press, 1961).

employment of adequate counseling techniques.

Historically, Carrington notes, marriage counseling is a young field which in its earliest stages centered about the giving of advice, typically in order to help wives adjust to an unhappy situation with occasional success in convincing the husband to be more sensitive to the wife's idiosyncrasies.

But the steep rise in the divorce rate and the large but unassessable separation rate over the last half of the century suggest that these traditional methods of counseling are not sufficiently effective in the strains of modern marriage.¹⁵

Carrington posits the notion that marriage counseling (which he defines as a healing process) must be a situational combination of psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, psychiatry, religion, and medicine, but *without* advice-giving as an essential characteristic.

The 'sick' marriage can best be healed when the partners are helped to help themselves, when the counselor can sit down patiently with them and give them the chance to 'see' themselves and their partners through the previously blinding mists of emotion, and then to apply 'sweet reason' free from the distortions of upset feelings, to their common task of rebuilding --or, if they see fit, of dissolving . . . their partnership.¹⁶

Carrington recognizes three groups of precipitating factors in marital conflict, viz. intrapersonal factors, interpersonal factors, and environmental factors. Much of his discussion parallels the principles of counseling articulated in most thorough texts on the subject (especially as written from a psychiatrically-oriented viewpoint). But throughout he maintains optimism regarding the possibility of healing

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 21.

troubled marriages:

In conclusion it may be stated that with all its trials and difficulties marriage counseling is the most rewarding of work, constantly strengthened by the awareness of its creative result.¹⁷

Carrington is neutral concerning separation and divorce; any decision in that direction is to be arrived at by mutual consent of the spouses being counseled.

Turning from a psychiatric perspective, a book dealing with marriage counseling from a clergyman's point of view is offered by Stewart.¹⁸ Stewart views the minister as carrying on a "helping operation" for "normal people" with marital problems, but as needing to gain skill in referring persons with severe problems to psychological or psychiatric counselors:

Suffice it to say, the better the minister is at appraising the personality of those who come for marriage counseling, the better counselor he will become.¹⁹

Stewart sees one major difficulty faced by the counseling pastor, viz. his community role as custodian of values (which includes that of the social institution of marriage), so that the minister needs to be careful not to assume the unhelpful mind-set of a judge. He defines the ideal counseling pastor as a catalytic agent enabling persons to arrive at new understandings of each other as well as facilitating the

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 255.

¹⁸Charles W. Stewart, *The Minister as Marriage Counselor* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1961).

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 80.

reestablishment of broken communication between spouses. He also emphasizes the need to help couples to adjust happily to character-trait differences in each other, and very much like Havemann,²⁰ he stresses the counselor's role in helping couples to understand and respect the uniqueness and personal goal-orientation of the individual in marriage.

In cases involving separation or estrangement, it is Stewart's view that the counselor's role is one of utilizing his power of persuasion to get both spouses to agree to counseling and to delay action on breaking up the marriage until they have stayed with the counseling process long enough to make responsible decisions. He does not advocate conjoint sessions with spouses until near the very end of the counseling process; however, neither does he advocate separation until all reconciliatory possibilities have been explored. He seems to imply that separation is a pre-divorce state of affairs.

Turning briefly to a clinical psychologist's point of view,²¹ Moser's thesis is that

Many marriages fail because the husband and wife do not know how to work for a good relationship. There is no denying that a happy marriage is the result of intelligent striving on the part of husband and wife.²²

In line with this contention, Moser sees five major types of

²⁰Havemann, *op. cit.*

²¹Leslie E. Moser, *Counseling: A Modern Emphasis in Religion* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1962).

²²*Ibid.*, p. 195.

problems brought to the marriage counseling interview: (1) legal problems, (2) economic problems, (3) biological problems, (4) psychological problems, and (5) ethical problems. Economic problems are rated as the most frequent in marriage counseling, and ethical problems stemming from religious conflicts are posited as the root of many marital failures. Moser believes that the minister is uniquely suited for the role of marriage counselor because of the role he plays in the community:

Before the development of a professional counseling discipline, the clergy was called upon almost exclusively for help. Aside from parents and friends of the marriage partners there was little place to turn except to the clergy. Today, even with other resources available, the clergyman receives more requests for help than others because he is by far the most logical source of help. Marriage ceremonies are performed by the clergyman; and because of his trusted position he is consulted when some difficulty threatens the relationship. He has a correspondingly strategic position for shaping the attitudes of young people relative to wise mate selection and for premarital counseling.²³

Moser also sees the clergyman as in the best position to prevent separation of conflicted marriage partners; his tacit assumption seems to be that doing so if at all possible is desirable and properly the marriage counselor's task.

An example of the comprehensive and useful newer literature in the field of marriage counseling is a book by Greene, a psychiatrist who also regards himself as a pastoral psychologist.²⁴ Greene

²³*Ibid.*, p. 177.

²⁴Bernard L. Greene, *A Clinical Approach to Marital Problems: Evaluation and Management* (Springfield, ILL: Thomas, 1970).

is a creative and well-organized eclectic who follows after Berne and Missildine and others but also espouses his own "multi-operational approach" to marital problems.²⁵ His approach embraces situationally conjoint, concurrent, classic psychoanalytic, collaborative (separate therapists for each spouse), or "combined" techniques. In the latter "the conflicted couple is seen in a variety of diadic and triadic clinical settings";²⁶ Greene's approach often includes family group therapy in the treatment plan.

As comprehensive and stimulating as Greene's book was, no mention of separation was made except in the context of divorce.²⁷ This was typical of the literature surveyed, demonstrating that the marital separation phenomenon has not been described adequately in or out of the therapeutic context.

IV. THE CHURCH AND MARITAL SEPARATION OR DISSOLUTION

This research dealt with marital separation within the context of *pastoral* marriage counseling, and the interviews for the study were conducted in a church-sponsored pastoral counseling center. Furthermore, the role of religion in the life of the separated spouse was a focus of the investigation. Thus, it was considered appropo to review the church's perspectives on the discontinuance--whether temporary or permanent--of marriages. In that marital separation was not discussed in the religious literature other than as tantamount or a prelude to

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 257f.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 338.

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 404-16.

divorce, it seemed safe to assume that separation would, on the part of a given religious body, have projected upon it whatever stance that group assumed towards dissolution of the relationship.

The Biblical injunctions against divorce have been given strict, literal interpretation by the Roman Catholic Church from its inception. Stewart has noted:

The Roman Catholic position is simple and clear. Marriage is a sacrament of the church and as such is a permanent institution from which believers have no recourse.²⁸

To elaborate the Roman Catholic position, the dissolution of a marriage is not permitted if both spouses have been baptized. However, canon law does accept dissolution under what is known as "Pauline Privilege," and Roman Catholics who are married to non-believers may enter into a new marriage *if* their former marriage is dissolved by authority of the pontificate.

The Protestant churches have for some time been divided into two camps with respect to the matter of dissolution of marriage. At one pole are those who hold to the Roman Catholic viewpoint--that divorce is not an option for the believer (at least not *de facto* divorce; *de jure* divorce may take place on earth but subsequent marriage constitutes adultery if the original spouse is still living). At the other end of the continuum are those Protestant groups who maintain that dissolution of a marriage is allowable on certain grounds (e.g., desertion, child molestation, spouse-beating, unfaithfulness, etc.).

²⁸Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

The rationale for this position seems to be that the Christian tradition since apostolic times has embraced spiritual values such as the infinite worthfulness of the human person more fondly than it has strict adherence to regulatory law. Some Protestant bodies have openly adopted the posture that love as evidenced by faithful action is requisite to the establishing and sustaining of a spiritual unity that may properly be described as "Christian marriage," and that no such marriage can be preserved by form, force, law, or doctrine.²⁹

Methodism may be seen as representing a "middle ground" among Protestants. It is true *de jure* that Methodism does not sanction divorce except on the ground of adultery, and that

Since marriage is of divine appointment and the union of one man and one woman entered into mutually, it is sacred and morally binding so long as both shall live and ought not be dissolved at will. When human failure results in placing the marriage in jeopardy, the Church strongly urges the persons involved to seek counsel with their minister in order to effect reconciliation so that the marriage may be preserved.³⁰

However, *de facto* tolerance of marital dissolution is implied by the repudiation of marriage as a formal sacrament, thus permitting the regulatory aspect of marriage to be the province of civil authorities, so that a Methodist clergyman is free to make his own determination as to whether he thinks a given person (divorced or not) is sufficiently mature to enter into and sustain a valid marital relationship. The

²⁹ Abstracted from J. G. Emerson, Jr., *Divorce, the Church, and Remarriage* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 14.

³⁰ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1968), p. 63.

minister is urged to exercise caution:

In view of the seriousness with which the Scriptures and the Church regard divorce, he may solemnize the marriage of a divorced person only when he has satisfied himself by careful counseling that (1) the divorced person is sufficiently aware of the factors leading to the failure of the previous marriage, (2) the divorced person is sincerely preparing to make the proposed marriage truly Christian, and (3) sufficient time has elapsed between the divorce and the contemplated marriage for adequate preparation and counseling.³¹

However, his decision-making freedom allows a Methodist minister much more latitude than is permitted his Roman Catholic, Episcopal, or Lutheran colleagues, while also placing a heavy judgmental responsibility upon him in his premarital interviews.

Emerson³² levels a penetrating attack against the sacramental or legalistic approach of the church to divorce. He contends that (1) a "dead marriage" is functionally as defunct as one in which one of the spouses has physically died, and (2) if a person has examined and accepted responsibility for his failure in the prior marriage and has understood that in his penitence he is forgiven by God (Emerson calls this "realized forgiveness"), then there is no "Christian" reason why such a party should not be permitted to marry. He further reasons that if only physical death terminates a marriage (as per some religious authorities), this makes marriage solely a physical matter, which contradicts virtually everything that the church has historically maintained regarding marriage as a spiritual union:

³¹*Ibid.*, pp. 127-128.

³²Emerson, *op. cit.*

How can it be held on the one hand that marriage is a spiritual sacrament which can never be broken and on the other hand that physical death breaks the bond? The answer that God has broken the bond by taking the person in death is not sufficient.³³

Literature of the past decade included discussions of post-divorce counseling, and this was seen in view of the present study as also having bearing on understanding the dynamics of marital separation. A recurrent theme in such discussions was: the counselor's task centers about facilitating the counselee's dealing in a healthy way with his unresolved feelings of guilt, failure, inadequacy, rejection, and so forth.³⁴

However, as early as 1958 a noted New York City minister, Bonnell, set forth principles for pastoral care of separated or divorced persons:

1. The pastor should assist each party to the estrangement to make the break a 'clean' one insofar as such is possible--unfinished business should be taken care of, unresolved feelings should be reported and resolved.
2. Each party should be helped to fully accept his own share of responsibility for the failure of the relationship to function satisfactorily.
3. The counseling pastor should utilize his advantageous role to assist the parties to find and act upon their proper place in both the social life and service life of the church.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 41.

³⁴Cf. in this regard Moser, *op. cit.*; Stewart, *op. cit.*; Morton M. Hunt, *The World of the Formerly Married* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966); P. Polatin, M.D., and Ellen C. Philtine, *Marriage in the Modern World* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1964).

4. The pastor-counselor can also render an invaluable service to divorced persons or persons contemplating dissolution of their marriage by clarifying any misconceptions regarding the issue of remarriage.³⁵

This surveyor was unable to discover any literary material elucidating the stance of any religious body towards the therapeutic separation idea. However, it was seen that scholars in the field of religion have grappled with some of the issues surrounding the rising separation and divorce rate. The stances of the writers reflected, of course, the theological postures of the religious bodies which they represented. In that there was no moral or ethical consensus with respect to the nature or validity of marital separation or dissolution, it follows that an individual is left to identify himself with a church with whose stance he is comfortable.

V. PHENOMENA OF MARITAL SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

... Extensive review was intended of those writings related to the phenomenology of marital separation but, as previously stated, there was a dearth of such material.

Some simplistic but noteworthy observations regarding fear of marital separation are made by Taylor:

Serious consideration of separation usually occurs during (marriage) counseling and this raises a number of questions in the minds of clients. A client often wonders if discussion of this alternative means that the counselor is suggesting such

³⁵ Abstracted from Bonnell, John Sutherland, "Counseling with Divorced Persons," *Pastoral Psychology*, IX:85 (September 1958), 11-15.

action . . . Another question is whether or not counseling is for the purpose of preventing separation . . . Sometimes a client wants reassurance that separation will not occur. The only honest answer is that such reassurance is impossible under any circumstances.³⁶

Taylor further advises anticipating the counselee's inevitably viewing a choice for separation as indicative of personal failure by explaining that there are instances when continuance of a maladaptive marital relationship may lead to the development of a psychotic break in one or both spouses!

One contribution to the understanding of observable phenomena characteristically accompanying extended marital separation or divorce is offered by Burns.³⁷ He states that symptomatic manifestations noted in such persons six months to a year into their singlehood include dryness of mouth, difficulty in breathing, nausea, and generalized weakness, plus "a pervasive sense of mental and physical malaise."³⁸ Such symptoms may be triggered by going places where one has been with the ex-partner, finding articles associated with him, or the mere mention of the ex-mate's name.

Burns also reports the observation of feelings of guilt and painful self-examining or self-accusatory behavior. He points out that

³⁶Donald L. Taylor, *Marriage Counseling: New Dimensions in the Art of Helping People* (Springfield, ILL: Thomas, 1965), pp. 7-8.

³⁷J. H. Burns, "What it Means to be Divorced," *Pastoral Psychology*, IX:85 (September 1958), 45-52.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 45.

. . . the meeting of each new day requires an all-out effort. There is little or no zest for living. Every attempt at social life is disappointing because these persons, so long having conformed to the pattern of married persons, are unaccustomed to the single role.³⁹

Burns states that successful adjustments are made by some with respect to emotional separation from the ex-mate, realism in evaluating current options, and self-responsible reconstruction of a new life not dependent upon the former marital partner. But he also observes consistent difficulties brought on by failure to deal creatively with unsolved problems which remain despite the demise of the marriage, the refusal of significant others who have taken sides to be of help, lack of understanding of the workings of the psyche following too traumatic a loss, and the prevalent societal attitude that not to stick with a marriage is weak or evil. Burns sees many parallels to pathological grief reactions as observed by Eric Lindemann at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Hypothetically, the most relevant work discovered in this literary search (with respect to the focus of this study) was a voluminous dissertation done by Irving, a Roman Catholic priest.⁴⁰ Irving, writing as a sociological researcher, obtained data from diocesan records of canonical separation applications and procedures and processed them by means of a statistical factor analysis methodology.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴⁰Gordon J. Irving, "Factors and Characteristics of Catholic Marriage Separations in Five Dioceses," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Notre Dame University, 1959) 297pp.

Of course, it is recognized that canonical separation is the only Roman Catholic form of divorce, and Irving researched only canonical separations:

The specific type of disruption dealt with was that which involved informed Catholics whose religious values were strong enough to compel them to go through the rather difficult and complicated procedures of canonical separation. Thus, any conclusions and generalizations that might be made will have this important restriction, and there is only a hypothetical relation to all Catholic marriage disruptions.⁴¹

Pertinent to this review were the author's conclusions:

1. Non-homogamous marriages (with reference to religious belief) tend to encounter difficulty sooner than do homogamous marriages.
2. Where spouses have wide age differences, the marriages tend to break up more rapidly than marriages with narrow age differences between spouses.
3. Early separations tend to occur more frequently among childless couples than among couples with progeny.
4. The major complaints given as reasons for requesting canonical separation were (in order): drink, adultery, temperamental clashes, and irresponsibility. Complaints regarding in-laws, money, and mental illness are alleged as disruptive factors less frequently.⁴²

Following his elucidation of these bland conclusions, Irving admitted:

This study concludes that the data and the analysis employed to arrive at causes or precipitating factors of disruption and separation are both methodologically and conceptually inadequate. The alleged basis of maladjustment may actually be the real source of conflict, but there is no means of guaranteeing or substantiating this from the data Inquiries such as this remain on a superficial level and fail to give the significant insights into marital problems.⁴³

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁴²The above points were abstracted from *ibid.*, pp. 268-274.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 277.

and, finally,

. . . what is the value of this study? The analysis of 'precipitating causes' has not revealed any certain valid relations, but it has pointed out certain areas of conflict that are considered serious by the parties.⁴⁴

VI. SEPARATION IN OTHER CONTEXTS

While this search revealed no literature on therapeutic separation, and little on marital separation, some material was discovered which treated human separation in general. The most relevant writings in this area to the focus of this study were those dealing with separation in the contexts of dying, death, and grief.

Knight and Herter (a surgeon and his co-author, a psychiatrist) understand separation primarily *as* grief or "anticipatory grief."⁴⁵

All separations are not the result of death. Genuine grief reactions can also be seen in individuals who have not experienced a bereavement but who have experienced separation. The families of servicemen in time of war often suffer a genuine grief reaction on the departure of a member of the family into the armed forces. Such separations occur under a threat of death but are not due to death. A common picture growing out of this type of situation is a syndrome which has been designated *anticipatory grief*.⁴⁶

Knight and Herter posit the theory of an innate "timetable of grief" which is oriented both to the time of the onset of a potentially fatal physical or relational illness and to the time of the actual death of the loved person or relationship.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 278.

⁴⁵James A. Knight, and Frederic Herter, "Anticipatory Grief" in Austin H. Kutscher (ed.) *Death and Bereavement* (Springfield, ILL: Thomas, 1969), pp. 196-201.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 197.

. . . the presence of grief in anticipation of the loss alters its subtle progression; the inevitable change has foreshadowed one's feelings; one is powerless, and a measure of resignation has crept in. A sorrowful reality is about to ensue; and actual death comes as an affirmation of our preknowledge . . . Because of his anticipatory grief, the bereaved or separated one more readily finds his way back to peace, according to the dictates of his own situation and the ensuing circumstances.⁴⁷

The authors illustrate their hypothesis with four brief case presentations, viz. an extended wartime separation, a patient with an ultimately fatal but long-term illness with periodic remissions, the prospective death of a child, and a terminal illness with death imminent and unavoidable. Their summary of the phenomena of grief following anticipated death was in certain details paralleled by descriptive data shared by some of the subjects who participated in the present research:

There is no initial shock phase. Preparations have already been made in detail. Friends and relatives have long since been informed of the impending end. Expressions of sympathy, acts of support have already been conferred. Grief has found its fullest expression long before death and has been gradually replaced by a resigned acceptance of the facts. Life alone has already begun and the attendant adjustments in thinking made. Death, under these circumstances, comes anticlimactically, without drama. A transient resurgence of grief may ensue, but it is dulled by long months of anticipation. More often, the end is marked by a sense of relief; of release from a protracted phase of anguish and suffering into a new life of relative normalcy. It is not unnatural that this suppressed relief should be accompanied by feelings of confusion and guilt. To the outside world, a posture of grieving must be assumed out of proportion to the actual sense of loss. In our culture, any overt expression of relief is inappropriate. Hence, honest emotions are sublimated to a degree, and a charade is played out.

Whatever conflicts may arise can be lessened significantly by a simple awareness of the nature of anticipatory grief . . .⁴⁸

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 200-201.

Switzer, a pastoral counselor who has researched the dynamics of grief, points out that a separation may trigger an inner (and possibly overt) reliving of the past:

. . . the death of a loved person, a separation, involves the reactivation of all earlier 'mourning' (separation) experiences. All early losses and threats of losses take over, and they are now experienced as contemporary threats to the integrity and existence of one's ego. Since the unconscious experience is that of the loss of one's good inner world and the increasing dominance of internal 'bad' objects, the inner world is perceived as in the process of disruption.

Therefore, not only does the ego seek to reinstate the lost loved object itself, but it also begins to try to bring back to life the earlier internalized good objects, originally the parents, who have been a literal living part of the inner world. These too are felt to have gone under, to be destroyed, whenever the loss of a loved person is experienced.⁴⁹

Switzer further states that

Each individual self is in reality a social self, or an interpersonal self, comprised of the dynamic union of the learned responses toward one's self whose original source was the perceived behavior of significant others to the infant and small child, and the introjected, perceived significant aspects of emotionally related persons. . . . being a person who came into being through interaction with other persons and whose selfhood is sustained through relationship, any broken relationship is perceived as a threat to the integrity of the self, and the organism responds with the subjective experience of pain and produces behavior which seeks to protect the self.⁵⁰

The thesis of Switzer's book is that "the major dynamic of the inner experience of grief is that of anxiety and that all of the behavioral responses observed and reported in grief are in some way related to this anxiety."⁵¹ He elaborates the concept by discussing

⁴⁹David K. Switzer, *The Dynamics of Grief* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), p. 40.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 93.

fear, anxiety (basic anxiety, separation anxiety, and what he terms "existential" anxiety), guilt, hostility, and healing as related to grief experiences. That which pertained to this study in Switzer's work is summed up in the following:

1. Separation is feared because it hurts, and pain is painful.
2. Separation is feared because of the anxiety it presents in the form of the loss of one's self-hood--the threat of non-being. The ultimate threat to any person's existence is isolation from a significant other by the act of the other.
3. The responses to separation, whether separation from its mother by a child or the loss of a loved person through death by an adult, or whatever form the separation takes, include self blame (guilt), displaced hostility, appeals for aid (often accompanied by rejection of offers of help), withdrawal, despair, regression, inertia, sense of emptiness, loss of organized social patterns of activity, and finally (hopefully) the reorganization of behavior directed towards a new object.⁵²

Deemed worthy of inclusion in this review were the "stages of dying" which the psychiatrist-thanatologist Kübler-Ross articulates as the normative pattern of experience in the face of permanent separation from significant others:

1. *Denial and isolation.* 'No, not me, it can't be true . . .'
2. *Anger and rage.* 'Why me?' Hostility may be directed towards God, family, or anyone else who affords a convenient target for ventilation.
3. *Bargaining.* 'All right, it's me, but . . .'
4. *Depression and despair.*
5. *Acceptance.*⁵³

⁵²Abstracted from *ibid.*, pp. 96-117.

⁵³Abstracted freely from Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and*

It is possible that some variation of the above series of stages is common to all separation experiences as well as to the experience of separation through physical death.

Finally, Bakan indicates a linkage between various forms of separation and disease:

Somatic diseases resulting from traumatic disruption of social relations have been demonstrated to occur as quickly as within twenty-four hours. Separation and estrangement from significant persons--actual, anticipated, or symbolic--have been implicated as factors in numerous diseases: asthma, cancer, congestive heart failure, diabetes mellitus, disseminated lupus erythematosus, functional uterine bleeding, Raynaud's disease, rheumatoid arthritis, thyrotoxicosis, tuberculosis, and ulcerative colitis. There is accumulating evidence that the duration of illness among persons is associated with psychological indicants, that the more favorable the indicants with respect to the mental health of the individual, the shorter the duration of the illness. There is evidence also that the psychological condition of patients is a good prognosticator of the effectiveness of medical treatment. The incidence of somatic disease among persons with definite psychological disturbance is substantially greater than normally expected, and a relationship between psychological disorder and various forms of socio-cultural separation and disintegration has been indicated . . .⁵⁴

VII. SUMMARY

Particularly in the past two decades, many attempts have been made, in response to the escalating separation and divorce rates, to analyze etiological and phenomenological factors in severe marital problems and to posit various approaches to the avoidance or healing of marital rifts. Ways and means of guiding separated and divorced

Dying (New York: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 38-137.

⁵⁴David Bakan, *Disease, Pain, and Sacrifice: Toward a Psychology of Suffering* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 9-10.

persons towards a constructive rebuilding of their lives have also been suggested.

However, the more one reads in the large body of literature dealing with these concerns, the more apparent it becomes that there is little agreement among authorities at many points: what people experience in marital conflict situations, who is best qualified to speak to such situations, what are the most viable techniques to be employed by a marriage counselor, what are the causes of marital disharmony, and what role the shifting cultural patterns of contemporary society plays, to name a few. A problem with many of the materials reviewed above is that they are based on theoretical speculation. The field of study of marital separation is still wide open to the researcher.

The present chapter served three main purposes. First, it demonstrated the lack of literature related to marital separation. Second, it reported the prevailing attitudes towards a separation on the part of those who have written on the subject. Third, what little could be learned about separation was presented in review. Summarily, it may be stated that

- (1) therapeutic marital separation is not treated in the literature;
- (2) marital separation is most often regarded as a *sine qua non* prelude to divorce;
- (3) there are no conclusive etiological answers to the question: 'Why do so many marriages fail?';
- (4) the church has no unified stance towards marital separation or dissolution, although it is generally not in favor of divorce;
- (5) separation is generally feared for a number of reasons, including the threat of isolation;

- (6) decrements in physical health may accompany extended marital separation or divorce, as may pathological grief reactions which include feelings of guilt and self-accusatory behavior;
- (7) anticipatory grief may precede separation and facilitate a minimizing of attendant trauma, or in some cases relief;
- (8) separation may trigger a covert (and possibly overt) reliving of the past; and, finally,
- (9) separation may be linked directly to physical disease.

At a low level of inference, it may be stated that the attendant problems of marriage have many facets--there is no singular problem, no single causative explanation, no blanket curative solution. Neither is there any singular experience in the face of marital conflict. The realities of such factors as a rapidly changing and fluid societal scene, the increasing powerlessness of religious doctrines, and the pervasiveness of emotional or mental maladaptiveness to the pressures of the modern world combine to make treatment of any facet of the subject an exceedingly complex matter. Thus, the overarching value of the foregoing survey was in furnishing a contextual backdrop for the report of the descriptive data to follow and its elaboration.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES AND THE GATHERING OF DATA

I. THE LOCALE OF THE SAMPLE

Because of the willingness of Interfaith Counseling Service of Scottsdale, Arizona to make available both counselees meeting the criteria for this investigation and the files on those clients, it was decided that Maricopa County (encompassing Phoenix, Arizona and environs) would be the location of the sample. It was further decided that only Interfaith Counseling Service clients would be selected as subjects. Therefore, the study is on the impact of marital separation on spouses in pastoral marriage counseling at a pastoral counseling center in Maricopa County, Arizona.

All interviews for this research were conducted in the offices of Interfaith Counseling Service between March 13, 1972 and July 9, 1972.

II. THE SOURCE OF THE SAMPLE

The Agency

Interfaith Counseling Service (formerly called Ecumenical Counseling Service) is a pastoral counseling center serving clientele with a wide variety of concerns. It is a young agency, having begun operations with a one-man staff on August 1, 1970 under the sponsorship of twenty Maricopa County churches. During the ensuing two years, the counseling center experienced remarkable growth. As of August 1,

1972, it was staffed by three full-time counselors, one half-time counselor, a secretary-recptionist, and a clerk-typist, in addition to a large number of lay and clergy volunteers who serve on boards and committees and assist in administration, planning, and maintenance. Funding sources include regular contributions from about thirty churches plus state and federal grants, in addition to client fees which are assessed on an ability-to-pay basis. As a non-profit religious corporation, the agency has two major thrusts--direct service counseling, and consultation and education for clergy and churches. Approximately three-quarters of its counselees are referred to Interfaith Counseling Service by ministers, the balance coming by self-referral or through secular agencies, physicians, attorneys, and so forth.

The Counselors

The subjects for the sample were involved in pastoral marriage counseling before, at the onset of, and during their separations, with one of the four men on the Interfaith Counseling Service staff. The counselors were somewhat varied in background and training, including a Lutheran minister with a Th.D. degree in pastoral counseling, a Methodist minister who is an Ed.D. candidate at Arizona State University, a Christian Church layman who is a certified clinical psychologist with extensive theological training, and a Baptist minister who is a Th.D. candidate in pastoral counseling.

There was, however, a euphonious therapeutic approach on the part of the four counselors. This unity consisted of two primary factors. First, in frequent agency and inter-agency staff conferences,

counselees such as the subjects of this research were discussed in detail with respect to such factors as case history, diagnosis, treatment plan, etc., so that no counselor worked in isolation but in consultation with both fellow staff members and agency consultants (psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers, the pastors of counselees, etc.). Second, the Interfaith Counseling Service staff espouses a self-conscious pastoral identity, illustrated by the following, drafted by the four counselors as part of a policy statement:

According to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus said 'I have come that men may have life, and may have it in all its fulness.' As pastoral counselors, we see ourselves as equipped and called both to move towards fulness of life ourselves and to facilitate that full life in others. Otherwise stated, our professional identities focus about a sense of call to deal as fully as possible with the whole person--with both spiritual values or meanings, and with those human concerns which are best understood psychologically or deterministically.

To do this skillfully and responsibly is our quest, and to that purpose we are committed. This involves a willingness to hurt--to agonize over the life dilemmas we encounter. It entails struggling to be open, and to be *with* people wherever they are in their struggles. It means maintaining a spirit of grace--the attitude that each person is infinitely worthwhile; but it also means being willing to risk judgement--to risk confronting a person with what we perceive as his irresponsible attitudes and actions towards himself, his fellows, and his God. It also implies a sensitive, shepherding stance towards life . . .¹

III. THE RESPONDANTS

Sociological Data

Although no socio-economic criteria were requisite to selection,

¹From a recent application for agency accreditation submitted to the American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

the twenty sample subjects were all middle-class or upper middle-class American born whites. Most were not native Arizonans, having migrated to Maricopa County from other parts of the United States. None had been married more than once. Eighty-five percent of the subjects were Protestants; 15% were Roman Catholics. On the average, their formal education was at the level of 2.3 years of college. Eighty percent of the males were white-collar or professional men; the remaining 20% were blue-collar workers functioning at the supervisory level. Seventy percent of the females had at least some college education; included among the women were a registered nurse, two school teachers, and a licensed real estate broker.

Other Demographic Data

Table 1 elaborates other pertinent data regarding the respondents.

Table 1 did not attempt to calculate males and females independently. Neither was any effort expended in processing and reporting of the interview data to take into special account that the following subjects were separated *from each other*: F1 and M1, F3 and M2, F4 and M3, F6 and M4, F7 and M6, F8 and M8, F10 and M10. Stated otherwise, the twenty sample subjects were regarded as individual respondents who happened to be separated spouses by choice. But some of them happened to be separated from other sample subjects.

TABLE 1
THE SAMPLE SUBJECTS: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA*

Subject #	Code #	Age	# of Years Married	# of Children	Ages of Children	# of Weeks Separated at Interview
1	F1	24	4	1	2	3.5
2	F2	22	3	1	2.5	12
3	F3	32	10	2	7, 4	2
4	F4	30	10	2	9, 8	6
5	F5	41	23	4	20, 19, 13, 8	3
6	F6	36	21	3	20, 16, 14	6
7	F7	33	13	2	11, 8	13
8	F8	43	22	5	21, 20, 17, 14, 13	12
9	F9	33	13	2	7, 3	6.5
10	F10	25	4	1	.5	4
11	M1	28	4	1	2	3.5
12	M2	32	10	2	7, 4	2
13	M3	32	10	2	9, 8	6
14	M4	40	21	3	20, 16, 14	6
15	M5	25	3	1	1	3
16	M6	38	13	2	11, 8	13
17	M7	28	5	1	.5	1
18	M8	43	22	5	21, 20, 17, 14, 13	12
19	M9	27	5	1	3.5	4
20	M10	29	4	1	.5	4
HIGH		43	23	5	21	13
LOW		22	3	1	.5	1
MEAN		32.1	11.0	2.1	10.6	6.1

*F = Female, and M = Male, hence the Code #s F1, F2, etc.

IV. THE INTERVIEW FORMAT

Pilot Study in Claremont, California

During Spring 1971, a pilot study called "An Enquiry into the Identity and Life Style of the Separated Spouse"² was done. The study was conducted by means of a single interview of about 90 minutes with nine separated spouses--four men, five women. The criteria for interviewees were virtually identical with those employed in the present research. However, the interviews were informal and loosely constructed, following no consistent pattern, although an attempt was made to include investigation into the elements of inner and outer behavior deemed crucial to that study. Respondants were also encouraged to add additional elements which they saw as important functions of their separations, a procedure which proved valuable to the evolution of the format for the interviews to follow later.

Further Pretesting and Refining

Subsequently, several separated spouses were interviewed in more depth than had been required for the pilot study. Different versions of the interview were employed, including various wordings of questions and various ordering of the sequence of investigative items. For example, attempts were made to integrate the life style category questions with the identity enquiries. It was decided that it was more productive to radically separate the two foci in order to keep at a

²John R. Landgraf, "An Enquiry into the Identity and Life Style of the Separated Spouse," (unpublished paper, Southern California School of Theology at Claremont, 1971).

minimum indiscriminately mixed descriptions of the overt and the covert--feelings described in the same sentence with activities and opinions, for example. In addition, four interviews were conducted in which the subjects were encouraged to more-or-less determine the shape of the interview, with the interviewer's task being to make certain that all categories of concern were covered before the interviews were concluded. It was the judgment of the interviewer that such an approach was too time-consuming and excessively difficult to chart for purposes of organizing and describing resultant data.

The interview format used with the subjects for this research (Appendix A) evolved, then, from the pilot study plus a number of subsequent experimental interviews. For purposes of this study, it was administered in the same sequence and in the same location to all respondents, and in approximately the same amount of time (viz., two hours--one hour for each set of categories).³

The timing of the interviewing procedures was also refined. The initial concept was that two separate interviews would be conducted with each subject, no more than one week apart and about one hour each in length. The first interview would center about the life style categories, and the second would focus on the identity categories. Pretesting demonstrated that this plan was unnecessarily cumbersome for both interviewer and respondent. Thus, the twenty interviews used

³The shortest interview was about 100 minutes. The lengthiest ran about 150 minutes. The length of interviews did not prove related to the number of pages of transcribed data produced.

for this study were conducted in two back-to-back segments on the same day in each case. In all cases but one, a coffee break of five minutes or so divided the two interview hours.

V. SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

In consultation with the Interfaith Counseling Service staff, persons who met the criteria for the sample were selected and interviewed on the basis of their availability and willingness to cooperate. The initial request for cooperation of a potential respondent was made by his counselor, who then notified the researcher that the counselee was expecting a telephone call to arrange a meeting time for the interview. Few who were approached refused the overture, and those who did did so on the basis of conflicts in schedules. One individual who agreed to participate was never interviewed, failing on three occasions to arrive for agreed-upon appointments. But on the whole, there was a cooperative spirit.

VI. GATHERING AND COMPILATION OF DATA

A form consenting to the tape recording and research use of the interview was signed by each subject. All interviews were taped and transcribed verbatim. The subjects' files were also read in detail, and used to garner additional (primarily demographic) data.

The completed transcriptions averaged about eight pages in length (single-spaced). Copies of the original transcriptions were made and these were cut and collated by categories after being coded

with subject identification numbers. The categorical data was then rated by criteria pertinent to each of the 23 categories of enquiry. The rating was done both by the interviewer-researcher and independently by an inter-rater (a graduate student at Arizona State University). The data ratings were entered onto a master chart (Appendix B) for further processing. Only ratings where a "+" or "-" symbol was agreed upon by both coders were processed further.

VII. SUMMARY

The interviews for this study were conducted in Maricopa County, Arizona between March 13 and July 9, 1972. The twenty subjects were clientele of Interfaith Counseling Service, a pastoral counseling center in Scottsdale, Arizona, where they were involved in pastoral marriage counseling with one of four counselors.

The average respondent was 32 years of age, married 11 years, the parent of two children, and separated from his partner for six weeks at the point of interview. Persons meeting the sample criteria were selected on the bases of availability and willingness to participate in the research.

The interviews consisted of enquiries into 23 categories of investigation, 11 of which dealt with overt, observable behavior (life style categories), and 12 of which probed inner, covert behavior (identity categories). Interviews were approximately two hours in length. The interviews were taped, transcribed, and then organized and coded in each category by the researcher and an independent inter-rater.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

I. INTRODUCTION

Due to the voluminous amount of categorical material, the charted data (Appendixes B and C) was processed with the help of a calculator, using both a Chi-Square (χ^2) Test and Fisher's Exact Test.

The Chi-Square Test was chosen as the method of general statistical analysis because of the categorical nature of the data. It (χ^2) was used to analyze the results for the entire sample on the proportions in the "+" and "-" categories, ignoring the "0" responses tabulated by either coder and testing the null hypothesis of equal proportionality (or, a 50-50 split).

To determine whether there was a differential reaction of males as opposed to females a contingency table was constructed eliminating those responses in the "0" category; this was then analyzed by a Fisher's Exact Test. The Fisher's Exact Test rather than another Chi-Square Test was required because of the small ends.

II. THE LIFE STYLE OF THE SEPARATED SPOUSE

The first 11 categories of investigation were designated "life style" categories (LS1 through LS11). These categories of enquiry were designed to garner information descriptive of perceived changes in overt behavior which the subjects attributed to their separations.

CATEGORY 1 (LS1): CHANGES IN STATE OF PHYSICAL HEALTH

The subjects were asked to respond to the question, "Have you observed any changes in the state of your physical health since you became separated?" The intent of the question was to ascertain whether the separated spouses were experiencing any overt organic symptomatology which they attributed to their separations. A "0" response indicated no change.¹ A "+" response indicated that the subject saw himself "more healthy" as a separated spouse; undesirable symptoms evident prior to the separation had disappeared or lessened in intensity. There was a change in a positive direction. To illustrate, the following was a "+" response:

Oh, I'm feeling much better. *Much* better. (Emphatic.) My nervous stomach is gone. And all of the dull aches and pains in my body and head are gone too. (F10)

A "-" response, on the other hand, indicated that the respondent saw himself "less healthy" separated than when living with his partner.

"-" responses included

I've had a breakdown. (Pause. Sobbing.) It's hard to explain. I got irrational, and exhausted, and sick. I almost had to go in the hospital. In fact, my therapist wanted that. But I wouldn't go. And I guess I don't need to anymore now. (F3)

Table 2 lists the Category 1 (LS1) results.

The χ^2 analysis revealed that there was a nearly significant ($p < .06$) tendency for the respondents to show increased physical

¹In categories 1 through 11, the meanings of "+", "0", and "-" vary from category to category, and must be understood as elaborated in each categorical description.

TABLE 2

PHYSICAL HEALTH

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	4	2	4		
Males	1	0	9		
Totals	5	2	13	$\chi^2 = 3.55556$ $Z = 1.88562$ $p < .0588$	Exact Probability (p) $< .08824$

problems as a function of their separations. In addition, in testing whether males had differential reactions than females, the Fisher's Exact Test indicated a nearly significant tendency ($p < .09$) for males to report more negative symptoms than females.

CATEGORY 2 (LS2): CHANGES IN INGESTIVE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

The interviewer posed the question, "Since you and your spouse separated, have there been any changes in your ingestive behavior patterns?" In six of the twenty interviews, the subjects asked that the term "ingestive" be elaborated. In these cases, "ingestive" was explained as meaning "what you take into your body, orally or otherwise." A "0" response would have signified no change; there were no "0" responses. A "+" response indicated that what the subject perceived as "positive" changes occurred; for example,

Well, I don't eat nearly as much since he's gone. When I do, I eat better food than I used to. Fortunately, I've lost seven or eight pounds, which I needed to. (F1)

"+" responses were recorded irrespective of whether the interviewer and inter-coder viewed the reported behaviors as positive *per se*:

Yes, I've started smoking. Because I want to, and F__ forbade it. I'm also eating and drinking what I want to, and when I want to. I've begun to use marijuana some, with my friends . . . (F10)

The subjects who gave responses rated "-" saw their ingestive patterns deteriorating. The following was typical:

I'm drinking more, I'm smoking more, and I don't eat properly at all. I've got food at the apartment but I don't like to cook it because I don't like to wash the dishes so a lot of times I just don't eat. A lot of this goes back years and years because of the 'P.R.' work involved in my job. It requires meeting a client in a bar . . . (Pause.) After I reach a certain point in my drinking I could care less whether or not I eat. That's been happening a lot lately. Too much, I guess. (M6)

The Category 2 (LS2) results are listed in Table 3.

TABLE 3

INGESTIVE PATTERNS

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	5	0	5		
Males	1	0	9		
Totals	6	0	14	$\chi^2 = 3.20000$ $Z = 1.78885$ $p < .0734$	Exact Probability (p) $< .07043$

The Chi-Square results showed that there was a nearly significant ($p < .07$) tendency on the part of the subjects to describe changes in ingestive behavior patterns as detrimental to their well-being. With respect to male-female differences, the Fisher's Exact Test result ($p < .07$) also approached significance, indicating a tendency for male respondents to experience more professedly negative ingestive changes than females.

CATEGORY 3 (LS3): CHANGES IN HANDLING OF FINANCIAL MATTERS

The third question posed by the interviewer was, "What change, if any, has there been in the way you are handling money matters?" The verbatim data in this category was processed by the coders in such a way that a "+" response signified that the interviewee either had less money with which to meet his financial obligations since the separation, or he was acting in a more conservative way in his spending habits not out of necessity but by choice. To illustrate,

When we were together I didn't handle the money at all. The biggest excitement of the whole separation has been starting a checking account of my own. And a savings account. That has been one thing that has really made me feel good. To be able to handle the money and not feel guilty about it and to know I can make it. I don't have an abundance of it but I have enough to get by on. I am being conservative. Maybe I'm a little Scotch. (Laugh.) This whole month has been a pain because the children have been ill, because I have to have a babysitter more and it does cost money. But that's the only way the money situation has bothered me . . . (F4)

A "-" was used in this category to denote that the interviewee either reported having more money to work with or that he was spending more liberally whether he saw himself as being able to afford it or not. A

number of responses resembled the following:

Yeah, I'm spending some, and on myself for a change. I figured I might as well get a comfortable car; my old one was falling apart. (Pause. Sigh.) I guess you might say I'm trying to spend more because . . . well, you know, she--I'm afraid she'll get too much anyway. (M9)

A "0" response again indicated no change.

Table 4 lists the results in this category.

TABLE 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	6	1	3		
Males	4	0	6		
Totals	10	1	9	$\chi^2 = .05263$ $Z = .22942$ $p < .8180$	Exact Probability (p) $< .24221$

The results of both the Chi-Square test and the Fisher's Exact Test revealed no significant tendency in either the "+" or "-" direction.

CATEGORY 4 (LS4): CHANGES IN PERSONAL
AND/OR HOUSEHOLD MAINTENANCE TASKS

The area of enquiry posed next was expressed as "Have there been changes in the tasks you do to keep up your person and your home? The information sought was both whether the subjects were doing more

("+" or less ("—") tasks and whether they were doing different tasks than when they were living with their partners. "+" responses included

I'm doing more things but I'm enjoying it. Sometimes I'm exhausted . . . getting up at 6 a.m. to clean house. But it's a relief compared with the hassle, the constant hassle to get him to do things around the house. (F4)

and

Well, now I'm doing it all myself; the laundry, the dishes, the dusting, the vacuuming, the shopping. I keep a fairly neat apartment. I surprise myself a little. I didn't realize how much she's affected me in my domestic habits. Before we got married, I was terrible. But so far in the separation, I'm keeping the same sort of standards that I had set in our marriage. I like that . . . I've actually found it interesting marketing and cooking! (M5)

Another kind of response also rated "+" was

It's all my baby now. And I don't like it! (Angry tone.) Mostly I'm just being a slob . . . not about my personal hygiene or appearance, but about the apartment. I mean, who's going to see it anyway? (M10)

Responses rated "0" signified no change. "—" responses, indicating primarily that the subject was doing less work around the home, were all similar to the following:

I'm not keeping the house up the way I did before. I guess I have to admit that I'm not as good a cook either, or at least I'm not fussing over it nearly as much--in fact, not at all. (Pause.) And I used to get out and help my husband when he did the yard work. Now it's just going to seed. (F3)

Results of this category of enquiry follow in Table 5.

The Chi-Square analysis of this category showed substantial significance at the $p < .03$ level; there was a definite tendency for subjects to report increases in tasks related to personal and/or household upkeep. In addition, the Fisher's Exact testing of whether

TABLE 5

PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD MAINTENANCE

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	3	3	4		
Males	10	0	0		
Totals	13	3	4	$\chi^2 = 4.76471$ $Z = 2.18282$ $p < .0292$	Exact Probability (p) $< .01471$

males had differential responses than females indicated a very significant tendency; large differences were found at the $p < .01$ level, evidencing increases in household and personal tasks among males as considerably more prominent than among females.

CATEGORY 5 (LS5): CHANGES IN PARENTAL
(CHILD-REARING RELATED) ACTIVITIES

In that all sample subjects were parents, the question "What changes have there been in your behavior as it relates to your children?" was included. The coders were asked to rate with a "+" those responses wherein subjects perceived what changes they experienced as changes for the better, and to give a "-" rating to those responses highlighting changes for the worse. There were no "0" or no-change responses coded. The following responses were coded "+":

I find that time spent with the kids is more valuable to me and to them. My wife and my kids have both said so. I see them two days per week. I'm ashamed to admit that's more time than I've ever spent with them. (M3)

I'm *making* time for the kids for the first time ever . . . (M6)

I spend more time with her. I think I can honestly say that I feel more like a mother to her during this time than I have in the two years I've had her. But I still try to allow time for myself, too . . . even when she's still up, not just after she's to bed. I can't say that I really dwell on having her there, but I will make the comment that if I didn't have her I could never make it through this separation. I feel that I have the responsibility of her. And she occupies a lot of my time. (F1)

Examples of "-" responses include

I feel guilty when I think about the children. Going to work took me away from them, but that's not all of it. I don't know why, but I'm withholding attention from them. I'm terribly impatient and cross. But at the same time I'm doing overprotective things. (F4)

and

I've seen little of the two kids except for one day when I had them practically all day. There's really no excuse for that . . . I just haven't made the effort. I have talked with them on the phone a few times . . . (M2)

Table 6 lists the results in this category.

The χ^2 results revealed that there was no significant tendency ($p < .65$) for subjects to experience either changes perceived as positive or negative in their child-rearing related activities. Likewise, the Fisher's Exact Test showed no meaningful difference between men and women in this category.

TABLE 6

PARENTAL ACTIVITIES

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	5	0	5		
Males	4	0	6		
Totals	9	0	11	$\chi^2 = .20000$ $Z = .44721$ $p < .6528$	Exact Probability (p) $< .50000$

CATEGORY 6 (LS6): CHANGES IN SOCIAL OR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The question "What changes, if any, have you made in your social or recreational life?" was asked. The purpose of this line of investigation was to ascertain whether the marital separation had contributed to an increase ("+") or decrease ("-") in the respondents' social and recreational activities. Also influencing the coders' ratings were responses which reported the undertaking of new social or recreational activities (towards "+") as opposed to no new social-recreational risk-taking (towards "-"). The most radical "+" response was

For the first time in my life I'm doing what I want to. No, I don't mean dating or sex; I'm not after that right now. But that will come too, of course, especially if we divorce. But I'm doing a lot playing with my girlfriends, and just a lot of running around and acting silly. It's more fun than I've had in years. (F10)

Several "+" subjects indicated that they were beginning to date, but none admitted to intimate dating relationships. The responses coded

"—" included the following:

I don't have any social or recreational life to speak of. I don't have much money. (Pause.) I drink . . . I sometimes go to a bar. Or, I try to read or watch T.V. I've tried to see some of our friends but that hasn't worked out because they seem to feel uncomfortable in a situation like I'm in. (Pause.) I guess I contribute to the discomfort . . . I can't accept my new role in relationship to them. (M7)

It's been *nil* since she left. (M10)

Well, I've gone out with my brother and sister-in-law two times. That's it. Nothing else. And I didn't enjoy that . . . they insisted. Mostly I just stay home. And cry . . . but that isn't much fun. (Sad smile.) (F5)

As in the previous (parental) category, no "0" responses were described.

Social-recreational activities results are listed in Table 7.

TABLE 7

SOCIAL AND/OR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

	+	0	—	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	3	0	7		
Males	3	0	7		
Totals	6	0	14	$\chi^2 = 3.20000$ $Z = 1.78885$ $p < .0734$	Exact Probability (p) $< .68576$

At the $p < .07$ level, the χ^2 results revealed a tendency towards a decrement in social or recreational activities approaching significance. On the other hand, the Fisher's Exact Test evidenced no difference ($p < .69$) between the male and female separated spouses.

CATEGORY 7 (LS7): CHANGES IN RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

The subjects of the sample for this research were counselees at a pastoral counseling center. Most of them were referred to Inter-faith Counseling Service by a clergyman, and all of them formalized their marriages in a church setting. The interviews for this study included an attempt to learn the behavioral effects of their separation on the religious practices of the respondents. This was done by means of the question "What effects has your being separated had on your religious life?" "0" coding indicated the reporting of no manifest change. The respondents in the "+" column purported to be doing more religious acts (church attendance, penance, prayer, reading of religious materials, etc.) than prior to their separations:

It's extraordinary for me to pray, and I have, several times. Given my history--I've had pretty negative feelings about my history with religion and the results of that, but--I've been willing to try anything. So I've prayed that everything will work out for the best for both of us. I'm not going to be presumptuous and say this is the way it should be, but I'm saying to God, if He is listening, to make it best for both of us. Whatever that might be. (M7)

I pray. I pray all of the time. For D___ and I to get back together, for D___ to forgive me where I've been wrong, for the courage to change where I need to, for the kids. I've prayed *with* the kids too, and asked them to pray daily. (F5)

I'm back to the Psalms, for the first time since childhood. (F8)

Religion is probably at the forefront for me right now. I've started going to a new church, primarily for socialization, especially within a group. . . . I guess my specific goal right now is to find groups--for friendship, fellowship, and relevancy. I think I sought this church out because it's more supportive. At least it should be more supportive than other places that I could go to right now . . . (M5)

The respondents coded "-" stated that their religious activities had

decreased or ceased during their separation:

I've bailed out. I'm sick of church--of all the phoniness, I guess. And of being bored. That's part of the reason I wanted to leave him. So I'm on vacation for a while . . . maybe for good . . . though I doubt it . . . (Long pause.) I just don't want to *have* to go. Right now, I'm not even praying these days. (F10)

Frankly, I'm getting a little disgusted with the church. The church is so political and businesslike . . . (Pause. Tears.) I've spent 11 years--maybe I married him for the wrong reasons--but it's been nothing but hell. (More tears.) I've prayed for it to be the opposite . . . I'm confused--about my own feelings, about my feelings for my husband--and I never thought I'd be so confused about my feelings towards God because I need . . . well, like I believe in God. I know He's there. But I wonder why . . . it's probably me punishing myself . . . but I wonder why . . . why, why can't I find happiness? (F4)

Table 8 lists the results of analyses in this category.

TABLE 8

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	7	1	2		
Males	7	2	1		
Totals	14	3	3	$\chi^2 = 7.11765$ $Z = 2.66789$ $p < .0076$	Exact Probability (p) $< .54706$

The Chi-Square analysis showed a very significant tendency for the subjects to increase their religion-oriented activities ($p < .01$) during their separation experiences. As to differential reactions on the part of men as opposed to women, the Fisher's Exact Test indicated

that there was no significant tendency ($p < .55$).

CATEGORY 8 (LS8): CHANGES IN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

The probing question, "What changes in your sexual behavior have occurred since you separated from your husband (wife)?" was placed towards the close of the first hour's interview, in the hope that the trust level between interviewer and interviewee would have deepened sufficiently at that point to facilitate candid responses. The completed interview transcripts suggested to the coders that the attempt was successful. There were no responses designated "0" (i.e., insufficient information for definitive coding). The responses rated "+" in this category indicate the reporting of definite change(s). The most frequently reported change was an increase (or inception) of masturbation. The following are examples of "+" responses:

I've begun to masturbate again. I think about my wife whenever I do it. (Long pause.) I guess it's a way of--I just enjoy imagining that we're back together and happier than ever. (M10)

There's an increase in masturbation. As far as contact with other women, well, with my sexual problem I know it wouldn't do me any good and I primarily use that as an excuse. (The subject went on to explain that he is a premature ejaculator.) (M1)

Yes, there's been a change. I have less sexual drive. In fact I have nothing. None. Very little desire. Only when I'm around *her*. (Pause.) Sometimes I question myself and wonder if that's even dried up. I don't know. I'm just kind of blanked out, I guess. I mean no masturbation, nothing. (M4)

A "-" was used in this category to indicate that there was no reported change in sexual behavior from the married state to the separated state. "-" responses included

Yeah, I don't care. (Laugh.) It used to bother me when he wanted it and I didn't. Now it doesn't bother me. I'm not answering the question, am I? No, there's been no change. I've lived without sex for quite a while . . . (Long pause.) When I stop to think about it I wonder if maybe I'm getting abnormal or something. (Pause.) I'm not going to worry about that right now though. There's going to have to be a lot of other changes in relationship before I can get back to that. (F6)

You know, it hasn't occurred to me. Wonder why it hasn't occurred to me? There's a lack there all right, but then it wasn't very good for a long time anyway so it's just a relief. I have to have a good reason to say no, and right now I've got one. (F8)

Category 8 results are found in Table 9.

TABLE 9

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	1	0	9		
Males	10	0	0		
Totals	11	0	9	$\chi^2 = .20000$ $Z = .44721$ $p < .6528$	Exact Probability (p) $< .00006$

The χ^2 analysis of Category 8 ($p < .65$) demonstrated that in the sample considered as a whole there was no significant tendency. However, in measuring whether males had different responses than females, the Fisher's Exact Test revealed an extremely significant tendency ($p < .001$); separated men in this sample tended to change their sexual behavior. The women in the sample tended not to.

CATEGORY 9 (LS9): CHANGES IN VOCATION-ORIENTED BEHAVIOR

The ninth area of investigation attempted to discover whether the sample subjects were behaving differently in connection with their vocations since they separated. The question, "Have any changes occurred that relate to what you do for a living?" was used to stimulate reflection upon this issue. In most instances, changes were described in one or both of two directions; the separated spouses were behaving differently with respect to their current jobs, and/or they were taking action aimed at a change of job. The coding of data was done on the following basis: a "+" rating was assigned if a respondent reported definite change in vocation-related behavior; a "0" was to indicate that the coder had insufficient information to give a definitive rating; and a "-" was assigned if the subject reported no change in activities related to his vocation. There were no "0" responses, and 95% of the subjects reported definite changes (+):

Yes, a couple of things. First, I've signed up for a summer workshop both to beef myself up and to have something to do. Second, I'm seriously thinking about changing jobs, because this is one of the things that's come between us . . . about my supporting my family. I'm a teacher--seventh and eighth grade science. I'm thinking of either changing professions or of making a change within my profession . . . That's one of the things I've been talking about a lot with Dr. S____. (M2)

It's extremely important for me to find out just exactly what it is that I do want to do. Not having a vocation makes me as a person seem a little bit pointless. I don't have one and still don't know exactly what it is that I do want to do, but I'm considering going back to school and I would like to go back to work at least part-time and just kind of feel my way but be looking. I know it's very necessary for me to find something . . . (F2)

. . . I've set aside this year to go back to work part-time and to go to college in the fall. I mean regardless of what happens to my marriage. (Pause.) I saw my role for the last three years as being home--I thought that was important. But perhaps I became sort of a non-person. It's true that doing things for E__ has given me joy at home . . . even ironing his shirts. But I also like the academic world; I always liked school and books. So now I'm determined to do something about it. (F9)

I'm putting in far less hours. I can't say my work is of less concern to me . . . What has changed has been my own attitude. I'm just not letting . . . trying not to let a client walk all over me with the demand that we've just gotta have this. I feel that if I can't get it done, it's just tough--you've gotta wait. That's a real change! (Emphatic.) I cheated my family again and again because I couldn't say no to anybody. Now I'm learning. (M6)

Table 10 charts the Category 9 data and results.

TABLE 10

VOCATION-ORIENTED BEHAVIOR

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	9	0	1		
Males	10	0	0		
Totals	19	0	1	$\chi^2 = 16.20000$ $Z = 4.02492$ $p < .0002$	Exact Probability (p) $< .50000$

The Chi-Square results showed that there was an extremely significant tendency (at the $p < .001$ level) for the respondents to make vocation-related behavioral changes as a functional response to their separations. On the contrary, the Fisher's Exact Test result was not significant ($p < .50$), indicating that neither sex tended more towards

change than the other, in this category.

CATEGORY 10 (LS10): CHANGES IN UTILIZATION OF OUTER RESOURCES

Another area in which "life style" was investigated was that of the respondents' "leaning" behavior. The question, "Whom are you using for support or help since you separated?" was asked, and subject responses were followed by a secondary question: "Is this new behavior for you?" The subject responses coded "0" reported no change:

I've used J___ F___, my minister at the church. And J___ my counselor, I guess. That's about all. (Long pause.) (Interviewer: 'Is this new behavior for you?') No, I was doing that long before we separated. But you know, everybody has advice, like the guys at work . . . somebody has gone through this or that. But the more you listen to it, the more it doesn't apply to you. So I try to be polite and listen to it all and then try to drink a cup of coffee and forget it. Because it's not them. It's easy to talk. But they're not going through it. (M8)

Responses coded "+" articulated the development and current use of new support sources on whom the subjects were leaning. For example,

My family is sad about this but supportive. And M___'s family --I sort of know them independently of M___--they've been very supportive, too, but not understanding, I don't think . . . But the big thing is that since the separation I've tended to be more aggressive in my relationships with other people. Counseling has really helped with that. So as a result I'm getting more feedback from other people, and that's a supportive thing. (M5)

One in particular--my daughter P___. We didn't used to talk, but now she is wired up to me. She asks me how it's going, and I ask her to do things with me or just to listen to me. I think I'm leaning on her a little too much . . . (F6)

Subject responses were coded "-" if they reported withdrawal from former support sources and the development of no new resource.

The results are listed in Table 11.

TABLE 11

UTILIZATION OF OUTER RESOURCES

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	7	2	1		
Males	4	6	0		
Totals	11	8	1	$\chi^2 = 8.33333$ $Z = 2.88675$ $p < .0038$	Exact Probability (p) $< .66667$

While the Fisher's Exact Test ($p < .67$) evidenced no significant tendency in males as opposed to females, the χ^2 results ($p < .004$) revealed a very significant tendency for the sample subjects to develop relationships with, and lean on, others for support in connection with their separations.

CATEGORY 11 (LS11): BEHAVIOR ORIENTATION--REALITY

VIS-A-VIS AVOIDANCE

The final category in the first interview segment was somewhat of a "catch-all" area of enquiry, and the question posed called for a value judgment on the part of the respondents. But the question, "Has your behavior become more reality-oriented or more avoidance-oriented in separation?" was calculated to garner data describing overt behavior, rendering this a proper "life style" concern. None of the subjects reported an absence of change; thus, there were no "0"

codings. The "+" codings indicated that those subjects saw themselves as acting in ways more in keeping with reality during separation than prior to it. Those who either admitted that their actions manifested primarily avoidance of reality or professed to be facing reality and then elaborated noticeably more avoidance-oriented than reality-oriented acts were rated "-". The "+" responses tended in the direction of

Overshwhelmingly more reality-oriented. I have a desire to realistically test my behavior by bouncing it off of other people . . . by actually just living . . . not just talking in a group setting but going out and trying out the behavior and seeing what the results are. (M5)

or

I think I'm facing reality more than I ever have. Ever. I think that I'm more capable of facing it since I sought professional help, than I would have been say even six weeks ago. (F9)

The above responses contrasted with "-" responses such as

. . . Work is escape . . . it's beautiful escape, because all I can think about is numbers . . . So that's eight hours. And taking care of the kids takes up a great deal of the rest of the time. So I don't know that I deal with reality except when I'm with Dr. W . . . I just don't think about it. (Pause.) You know, I didn't see that before just now. I'm *not* dealing with it. (F8)

The results for Category 11 are listed in the table below.

The χ^2 analysis of Category 11 data revealed a very significant tendency ($p < .01$) for the respondents to do more reality-facing acts as a function of their separations. No significant difference between the male and female halves of the sample was revealed by the Fisher's Exact Test ($p < .29$).

TABLE 12

BEHAVIOR ORIENTATION: REALITY VIS-A-VIS AVOIDANCE

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	7	0	3		
Males	9	0	1		
Totals	16	0	4	$\chi^2 = 7.20000$ $Z = 2.68328$ $p < .0074$	Exact Probability (p) $< .29102$

III. THE IDENTITY OF THE SEPARATED SPOUSE

Categories 12 through 23--the second segment of the two-part interviews--were designed as "identity" categories (ID1 through ID12). These categories of enquiry were developed in an effort to gain information depicting perceived changes in covert, inner behavior which respondents related to their separations. Attitudes, feelings, and patterns of thought were actively sought after. The general approach was to stimulate awareness of a continuum stretching between two polar perceptual stances and to ask the interviewee to share his self-portrait, in the light of his separation, with respect to the continuum under discussion. Interview questions were posed in a way designed to "force" a choice between the two poles of each continuum, wherever possible.

CATEGORY 12 (ID1): FREEDOM IN TENSION WITH BONDAGE

The initial question in the second block of interview time was "Do you see yourself as more free right now than you were when you and your wife (husband) were together, or do you see yourself as more bound?" In coding the transcribed responses, "+" was used to denote feelings, attitudes, and perceptions describing more freedom in the separated state than in the former married state. By way of contrast, "-" was employed to indicate feelings, attitudes, and perceptions of increased bondage in the separated state as over against the prior married state.² The following were coded as "+" responses:

I have a much freer feeling--kind of the feeling that I can do what I damn well please when I feel like doing it, without having the care and responsibility for someone else. Frankly, I'm enjoying it. (M2)

. . . To be separated is to feel free. To be married is to feel much more bound. To be separated is to feel a spirit of celebration. To be married is to feel more depressed. (Pause.) That's the way I see it. (F1)

I can be more free now. I don't have to please somebody constantly. I can even read a book if I want to! (Laugh.) That was one of many no-no's around our house . . . (F6)

I feel the freest I've ever felt in my life. And it's a good feeling. (Pause.) I'll just say it; I feel like celebrating. And I am, some . . . (F10)

"-" responses included

²In categories 12 through 23, the meaning of "0" is consistent. "0" denotes a response which was either too indefinite to be coded as a "+" or "-", or which held the polar options in tension as a "both-and" rather than assigning prominence to either. ("+" and "-" are elaborated in each categorical description.)

I'd have to say I am more bound, because of my children. In this particular moment when I'm in much better shape than last week I feel somewhat like--as my husband has been saying so currently--'That's my prerogative.' But otherwise my feeling is much more of duty and being bound, because of my children. Like I may have a lifetime obligation ahead of me. Kind of frightening . . . There's no option about that. I'm going to raise those kids. That is, if that's the way it has to be, if we part ways. Oh, I just hate that word 'divorce.' I'm trying to avoid it. I feel like I'm being pessimistic when I even think that way. (F9)

. . . It's because I feel so bound, so trapped by her, that I'm thinking seriously of going ahead and filing for divorce. I think the divorce would free me of her . . . (M9)

It feels more like I'm a slave to her--a victim of her childish whims. I felt much freer when we were first married . . . like I had the world by the tail. (Sigh.) (M10)

Table 13 lists the Category 12 (ID1) results.

TABLE 13

FREEDOM $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ BONDAGE*³

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	7	0	3		
Males	3	0	7		
Totals	10	0	10	$\chi^2 = .00000$ $Z = .00000$ $p < 1.0000$	Exact Probability (p) $< .08945$

The χ^2 analysis revealed that there was no tendency whatever

³The symbol $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ denotes "in tension with."

for the respondents to perceive themselves as either more free or more bound ($p < 1.00$). An equal number changed in each direction. However, in testing whether males had differential reactions than females, the Fisher's Exact Test indicated a tendency approaching significance ($p < .09$) for males to move towards seeing themselves as more bound, whereas females tended to move in the opposite direction.

CATEGORY 13 (ID2): DESIRE FOR DISTANCE IN TENSION
WITH DESIRE FOR CLOSENESS

The interviewer next posed the question "Since you separated, do you feel like you want more distance from people than before, or do you feel you'd like to be closer to others than before?" The subjects frequently replied by sharing background material as to their history of being "a loner" or "choosing my friends carefully," or being "one who's always had lots of close relationships." The verbatim responses were coded "+" if it seemed apparent that since their separation the subjects had sought more distance from other persons:

Distance, I think. I just want to be alone. (Pause.) Here again, I'll never accomplish anything that way, will I, I mean as far as getting everything straightened out. I know this, but yet I haven't . . . I haven't yet figured out what to do about it, and how. (M8)

Distance. Definitely. I need release from that smothered feeling I had for so long . . . (F1)

. . . I've never been real close to people. It's probably because I was raised on a farm those first few years. Though I usually have one or two or three fairly close friends. Of course, I've got lots of people who know me, and I smile a lot. (Pause.) These days? Well, I like being alone these days. It's kind of nice. (F8)

If the subject wanted more closeness with others since separating, his response was rated "—":

My desire for closeness is greater by far--I want to be held, to be stroked, to be affirmed. Especially now I do. Don't get me wrong, I do not want to *belong* to anyone right now. But I want to have people care about me and accept me and tell me it's okay. (F2)

(Long pause.) I'm feeling like I want to be *with* someone, more so than in the unseparated state. I just want somebody around, somebody there if I want to talk to them. Since I left, I can't remember ever feeling like I wanted to be by myself. Usually I enjoy being by myself, but now I never feel like 'Everybody go away and leave me alone.' I think some of the phone calls I'm making are because I'm alone and just feel like I *have* to get on the phone and talk to someone. I've never felt that way before. (M2)

I have far more desire for closeness with her than when we were together. With anyone, for that matter. (M3)

The Category 13 (ID2) results are listed in Table 14.

TABLE 14

DESIRE FOR DISTANCE $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ DESIRE FOR CLOSENESS

	+	0	—	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	2	5	3		
Males	2	0	8		
Totals	4	5	11	$\chi^2 = 3.26667$ $Z = 1.80739$ $p < .0702$	Exact Probability (p) $< .40659$

The Chi-Square results showed that there was a nearly significant ($p < .07$) tendency on the part of the subjects to want more

closeness with other people than they did when living with their spouses. With respect to male-female differences, the Fisher's Exact Test result ($p < .41$) showed no significant tendency.

CATEGORY 14 (ID3): TRANSITORINESS IN TENSION WITH SETTLEDNESS

The third identity-related question posed by the interviewer was "Do you think you have settled into the separated state pretty well, or do you feel like it's a transitory thing--a sort of limbo state?" A response was to be rated "-" if the respondent indicated that he felt as much at peace with the separated state as he had with his identity as a married person. A "+" rating indicated unsettledness--the feeling that at best separation was at best a temporary state of affairs. The coding of the verbatim segments produced no "0" or "-" replies, only "+"s:

I'm very unsettled. You know, after we spent two good Sundays together I had made up my mind that I really did want my husband. But then when he comes to see the kids I think 'Do I?' I just don't know if I love him or if I'm just dependent on him. I'm all mixed up about that . . . (F4)

A week ago I would have said that it wouldn't be unusual for it to go on to months, but I couldn't work at it that long. I like to feel that it's a short-term separation. But there again it isn't my decision. None of this is my decision. I'm just in limbo. It's all E___'s decision. . . . I would need both of us working at it--not just me. (F9)

I feel like this is the beginning of a change. A dynamic period. I'm en route to someplace else. (M5)

This is a stepping off place, or maybe better a stopping off place. I sure wouldn't want to *live* here . . . (M6)

I feel like a pilgrim between someplace I thought I knew as home and someplace unknown. (M10)

Table 15 lists the results in this category.

TABLE 15

TRANSITORINESS $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ SETTLEDNESS

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Results
Females	10	0	0		
Males	10	0	0		
Totals	20	0	0	$\chi^2 = 20.00000$ $Z = 4.47214$ $p < .0002$	Exact Probability (p) < 1.00000

The χ^2 results revealed an extremely significant tendency at the $p < .001$ level for separation to be accompanied by a transitory self-description--a heightening of feelings and thoughts of unsettledness. The Fisher's Exact Test result, on the other hand, revealed no differences between the men and women in the sample ($p < 1.00$).

CATEGORY 15 (ID4): INNER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN
TENSION WITH TOTAL RELIANCE ON OUTER RESOURCES

The next area of investigation was opened with the question, "Where do you see yourself as concentrating more energy these days--on developing your own inner resources, or on finding help outside yourself?" This line of enquiry was introduced to probe the issue of autonomy versus dependence; was the separation experience facilitating more change in the direction of self-actualization or in the direction

of more other-directedness? A response rated "+" was one wherein the subject described increasing reliance on his emerging inner strengths. A "-" response indicated that the subject was primarily (if not totally) borrowing strength and/or advice from others. The "+" responses included

I am working on one thing right now--trying to learn how to have a relaxed 'I-me' relationship. (M7)

Inner. (Pause.) It's 'cure S__.' S__'s got to find strength in S__. (F7)

I feel I have to learn to stand on my own. That's what it's all about right now. As for advice, I listen to it and then I weigh it to see what I feel is comfortable. If I have any questionable doubt in my mind, usually I think about it for the next week and then bring it up when I come to counseling. (M4)

Well, I've been reading a lot . . . I find a lot of valuable information in the things I've been reading. Then I'm just kind of going out and looking and being on my own and realizing that it is *me* that is going to have to inevitably work out these things--that I can take information and try to use it but it's going to have to be me that's going to have to apply it and nobody else can apply it for me. (F2)

The following were among the responses coded "-":

Well, there's counseling; that's to find help. And like I already said, a lot of my friends are saying 'Divorce her and don't look back.' (Pause.) I guess I am listening mostly to what the society around me says . . . (M9)

I'd have to say more on the outside. I don't know if you know what happened to me yesterday, but yesterday when I walked in here and found out that I didn't have an appointment--there'd been a mix-up--anyway, when I found that out I just fell apart. That had buoyed me up so much, just to think that I had somebody to talk to . . . Fortunately I went on to see the pastor and he had time, so that made everything okay. (F9)

Results of this category of enquiry follow in Table 16.

TABLE 16

INNER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT $\rightleftharpoons$ RELIANCE ON OUTER RESOURCES

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	7	0	3		
Males	8	0	2		
Totals	15	0	5	$\chi^2 = 5.00000$ $Z = 2.23607$ $p < .0250$	Exact Probability (p) $< .50000$

The Chi-Square analysis of this category evidenced significance at the $p < .03$ level; there was a definite tendency for subjects to move towards the development and utilization of more inner resources. The Fisher's Exact Test result ($p < .50$) showed that there was no significant tendency for men as opposed to women respondents.

CATEGORY 16 (ID5): INTACT, STABLE IDENTITY IN
TENSION WITH IDENTITY DIFFUSION

To gain direct feedback from the subjects as to their self-definitions, they were instructed to ask themselves the question, "Who am I?" and to answer it in any way they chose. The precise interviewer's request was "Speaking as a separated spouse, I'd like you to respond in any way you want to to the question 'Who is (subject's name)?'; in other words, how would you answer the question 'Who am I?' right now?" In reading the verbatim transcripts, the coders attempted

to rate all subject responses "+" if the self-definitions tended to be somewhat clear as to the ongoing selfhood of the speaker, regardless of the details of the reply:

I am a mother, I am a wife, I am an employee, and I am an individual within those roles. I've never worried about who I am. I am who I am, and I am fairly happy with who I am. . . . I used to think that D___ had quite a bit to do with who I was, but I don't believe that anymore. Because right now he's gone, and I'm not really anybody different. I'm still S___. (F7)

I am *me*, for a change. I am doing what I want to do, and I am satisfied and happy with myself. In fact, I guess I'm more *me* now, because I'm not worried about whether it pleases or displeases. (F1)

A subject's response was rated "-" if he talked about who he used to be or if his attempt at self-definition was obviously amorphous:

Well, I don't know. Right now it would be nothing. I don't really know the why behind that either. I used to think I knew. But I can't even make a stab at that right now. (M8)

Who am I? Fragmented, insecure, groping, conjuring the way things could be, the way things were . . . (M7)

Nothing. A potential divorcee. Nothing. (Tears.) How can others hold their husband and I fail? I'm nobody. (F5)

. . . Questionable. Presently I feel a very lost soul. I feel a deep need to be wanted, to be told that I'm needed and wanted. I need a purpose to hang on for, rather than telling myself things will get better, that everything turns out one way or the other for the best. Because even though I left when G___ L___ suggested it if I felt the way I did about my marriage, there's a lot of days now when I feel like ending it all. (Pause.) (Interviewer: 'Say a bit more about that.') Oh, I wouldn't really do anything like that. . . . The biggest problem I have is self-pity, I guess. I'm so lost, and you get so damned lonely at times . . . (M4)

Table 17 lists the results in Category 16 (ID5).

The χ^2 results revealed that there was a very significant tendency ($p < .002$) for subjects to experience identity diffusion as

TABLE 17

INTACT, STABLE IDENTITY $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ IDENTITY DIFFUSION

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	3	0	7		
Males	0	0	10		
Totals	3	0	17	$\chi^2 = 9.80000$ $Z = 3.13050$ $p < .0018$	Exact Probability (p) $< .10526$

a part of their separation experience. The Fisher's Exact Test showed no meaningful difference between men and women in this category ($p < .15$).

CATEGORY 17 (ID6): DEPRESSION IN TENSION WITH ELATION

"Would you characterize yourself as more depressed since you separated, or would you say you are more elated--happier?" was the next identity-related question. Depression or grief-oriented replies were coded "+"; elation or celebration-oriented replies were coded "-". The following were characteristic "+" and "-" responses.

"+":

Much more depressed. There's a sense of loss . . . the sense of loss is keen, and twofold--close proximity to my kids, and sharing my love with my wife. (Pause.) There's a third thing too; I am also grieving at the pain of facing truths about myself. (M3)

I think I've tried to make it more celebration but it doesn't work out that way. It's grief and despair. Not because I define it that way, but because it defines *itself* that way for me. I've gone drinking, I've tried to pick up a girl . . . (Apologetically.) Not for sex, mind you; I was trying to strike up a relationship, some kind of communication. But it didn't work out, primarily because my attitude wasn't very acceptable at that point in time. It still isn't. I'm very distraught. So it turns out to be depression, although the initial idea was to try to make the best of it. (M7)

"_":

I'm thrilled, and happy. I *wanted* him to make this decision to separate from me, and he finally made it. (F7)

I'm so glad I finally got the guts to leave. I'm celebrating my new freedom. The only time I feel down is when I have to deal with F__ or his family. Or mine. But I try to avoid that because that's their problem anyway. (F10)

Response tendencies on the depression-elation continuum are listed in Table 18.

TABLE 18

DEPRESSION $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ ELATION

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	3	2	5		
Males	9	1	0		
Totals	12	3	5	$\chi^2 = 2.88235$ $Z = 1.69775$ $p < .0892$	Exact Probability (p) $< .00905$

At the $p < .09$ level, the χ^2 results showed a tendency towards depression which approached significance. However, the crucial

statistic in this category was the Fisher's Exact Test result ($p < .009$), which revealed a very significant tendency for male respondents to report themselves as depressed in separation more than the female subjects.

CATEGORY 18 (ID7): MISTRUST IN TENSION WITH TRUSTFULNESS

This investigative category attempted to ascertain whether the subjects had come to assume a more skeptical attitudinal stance towards people since they separated from their spouses: "Do you think you are more distrustful towards people in general now that you are separated? Or have you become more trustful?" In coding, those who said their mistrust had heightened were given "+" ratings. No subject said that his trust level had deepened (although the inter-coder saw M7 that way; cf. Appendix B). In six cases ("0"), a healthy tension between skepticism and trustfulness prevailed, or they reported that their separations had not affected their posture with respect to the issue under discussion. The 14 "+"-rated responses included the following verbatim segments:

I am scared, I am skeptical, I am hanging back more. Not just with him, with everybody right now. I *don't* want more hurt again. . . . I feel like a yellow light; I will proceed with caution. (M1)

I'm very skeptical. I'm not sure I can ever really trust again. (Long pause. Silence.) (Interviewer: 'Her?') Yes . . . or any other woman. (M8)

I'm currently doubtful of nearly everything, including my faith. I think I will trust again, but not for a while . . . maybe not for a long time. That depends on a lot of things. But I was pretty gullible and I think I need to be a skeptic for a while. (M10)

I'm very distrustful. But I don't think it's about the other person as much as it is about myself. I guess a lot of it is related to the breakup with B___. He told me when I left that I didn't have enough love in me to give to somebody. And that wasn't the first time he's said it. Maybe I don't. (Almost crying.) It got to the point that I didn't feel any love, and I don't now, towards him, and maybe I'll always feel that way towards anybody. That's what I'm most doubtful of--my capacity to love anybody. (F6)

Category 18 results are found in Table 19.

TABLE 19

MISTRUST $\rightleftharpoons$ TRUSTFULNESS

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	6	4	0		
Males	8	2	0		
Totals	14	6	0	$\chi^2 = 14.00000$ $Z = 3.74166$ $p < .0002$	Exact Probability (p) < 1.00000

The χ^2 analysis of Category 18 responses ($p < .001$) pointed to an extremely significant tendency for the trust level of the interviewees to lower in separation. The Fisher's Exact Test showed no difference between men and women respondents.

CATEGORY 19 (ID8): ANXIETY IN TENSION WITH RELAXATION

The ninth area of identity investigation centered about the question "Would you say you are a more relaxed person now that you are

separated from your husband (wife), or are you a more anxious person?"

"+" ratings denoted an intensification of anxiety, and "-" ratings were indicative of a lessening of prior anxiety. For example, the following were "+"-rated responses:

I'm not relaxed at all. When I've had a few glasses of wine I can relax. But up to the present time it has been depression-induced anxiety ever since we separated. (Pause.) Right now I just feel all churned up in my stomach. (F9)

. . . I'm much more relaxed as a married guy. (M1)

I feel like I'm more anxious. It's hard to relax at all when everything is so up in the air. Once in a while I can relax and laugh at it all--when I'm with my friends having a few beers. But at night I'm awfully nervous and anxious. (M9)

"-" responses included

There's no comparison. I've been tense for a couple of years and all of a sudden I've laid that load of tension down. (F10)

(Laugh.) There's no question in my mind about this one. I am definitely more relaxed. (F3)

Table 20 charts the Category 19 data and results.

TABLE 20

ANXIETY $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ RELAXATION

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	4	2	4		
Males	9	1	0		
Totals	13	3	4	$\chi^2 = 4.76471$ $Z = 2.18282$ $p < .0292$	Exact Probability (p) $< .02941$

The Chi-Square results ($p < .03$) showed that there was a significant trend towards anxiety on the subjects' part. In addition,

the Fisher's Exact Test result ($p < .03$) attributed a significant tendency for the men to admit more increased anxiousness than the women.

CATEGORY 20 (ID9): SELF-RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE
IN TENSION WITH A BLAMING ATTITUDE

Another area in which identity was investigated was that of the subjects' acceptance of responsibility for their separated state. They were asked, "Who, if anybody, is responsible for where you find yourself right now?" Replies tended towards one pole or the other of the posed continuum more radically in this category than in any other. "+" coding was assigned to the self-responsible attitudinal stances which were articulated, which included the following:

I did what I wanted to do and I'm glad I did it. That's my thing, and I assume full responsibility. Just like I accept my responsibility in marrying him in the first place . . . I didn't *have* to--I *wanted* to at that time. Right now I want to live alone. (F10)

That's hard to say. I think that there were a lot of things that were done to me through the years that I had no control over because I didn't know and they didn't know either. But . . . that's all well and good, and that's all done with. Now it is my responsibility to rearrange all those things and change my attitudes that aren't correct. I don't have any excuse for the things I do now. It's my responsibility. (F2)

I'm self-responsible. I'm where I want to be. At least I think I am, because I'm the one who asked for the separation. (F4)

I myself am responsible. Without accepting it all. I say that because I did crap on myself for a long time until I finally came to grips with things. (M5)

The symbol "-" was assigned to statements assigning blame, whether

blame of spouse, blame of fate, blame of self, or whatever.⁴ Note, for example, the first example of the "-" statements below in contrast to the final "+" example above.

I'm to blame. Nobody but me. I'm blaming myself instead of her. I've failed, somewhere . . . (Pause.) (Interviewer: 'Where?') I don't know, in the marriage somewhere--to force her into a position like this. 'Where' is the question I ask myself. (Pause.) And the kids . . . I've failed them too. (M8)

Well, you know what I'm going to say. If she weren't so cold, selfish, and hardheaded, we would never have had to separate. She wouldn't talk to me regarding her problems, so how could I change for her? (M9)

I'm not really trying to blame her *but* (M1 used the next several minutes of the interview to explain why his wife was to blame.) . . .

I have a great deal of hatred--a vengeful attitude. Dr. S__ says I'm vengeful, and he's right. I blame J__ for our marriage coming to this. I had that feeling before the separation too, but even more now. Or at least I'm letting it out more now. (F3)

The Category 20 (ID9) results are listed in the table below.

TABLE 21

SELF-RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ BLAMING ATTITUDE

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	6	0	4		
Males	2	0	8		
Totals	8	0	12	$\chi^2 = .80000$ $Z = .89443$ $p < .3734$	Exact Probability (p) $< .08490$

⁴N.B.: The word "blame" was carefully avoided by the inter-

While the Fisher's Exact Test ($p < .08$) revealed a nearly significant tendency for males to assign more blame than females, the χ^2 results of $p < .37$ showed no significant trend in the sample as a whole.

CATEGORY 21 (ID10): GROWTH MOTIVATION:

THE PUSH OF PAIN IN TENSION WITH THE PULL OF GROWTH

In order to explore the dynamics of the separations in terms of impetus for the subjects' continuing to desire change, the following question was posed: "At this point, what drives you to keep working at your own growth? Is it more because you want to get out of a painful spot, or more because you have an inner picture of whom you'd like to become and that dream lures you on?" The pain-dynamic as motivation was coded "+". If the respondent reported a sense of being drawn as his growth-dynamic, the "-" symbol was assigned. The "+" responses were typically similar to the following:

The pain of the whole thing does get to me . . . that's what's driving me all right. (Pause.) It was pain that got me to seek counseling, and that got me to consent to this separation idea. . . . To get myself out of this mess drives me all the time. That's why I came to this meeting with you. (M1)

Those who expressed "-"-rated responses did so clearly:

Well, I think that what's going on right now is that I want to more and more do, in Viktor Frankl's words, the responsible thing. Not to experience a bunch of childish motivations or to run, but to make a constructive thing out of this separation and out of my life. (M7)

viewer, but it was used by about one-half of the subjects.

I really *want* to grow, to become all that I can be as a man. If I've made mistakes that are irrevocable, that's too bad. But right now, in this moment, I don't so much sense a desire to get away from the past as to move towards the future--*my* future. (Pause.) That sounds strong, doesn't it? But I really mean it. Of course, I'd sure like it if S___ could be a part of it too. (M10)

The results for this category follow (Table 22).

TABLE 22

GROWTH MOTIVATION: PUSH OF PAIN $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ PULL OF GROWTH

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	5	4	1		
Males	7	0	3		
Totals	12	4	4	$\chi^2 = 4.00000$ $Z = 2.00000$ $p \Leftarrow .0456$	Exact Probability (p) $\Leftarrow .51099$

The χ^2 analysis of Table 22 data, testing whether the pain-dynamic was a more primary growth motivator for the respondents than the lure towards self betterment, attained significance at the .05 level. The $p \Leftarrow .51$ result of the Fisher's Exact Test was not significant.

CATEGORY 22 (ID11): THE COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP:
INTENSIFICATION VIS-A-VIS DECREASED INTEREST

It was deemed valuable to gather information regarding any changes in the counselor-counselee relationship that had occurred since the subjects' separations. Thus, the question, "Has your

involvement with (counselor's name) changed in importance to you since you are separated?" was incorporated into the interview. In the coding of transcribed responses, "+" represented the perceived intensification of the respondent's involvement in counseling. "-" was to represent a decrease in importance of that relationship in a subject's thinking. There were no "-" responses. There was one response rated "0" by both coders, viz.

It probably has stayed just about the same. It was important to me before and it still is. The focus is different--that has changed. Before we separated I was coming alone and working on S___. Then when I told D___ I wanted him to leave, he started coming in. But I was still seeing J___ by myself. But now we're coming sometimes separately and every other week together, and even when I come alone J___ and I spend most of the time looking at what's going on with D___ and me. So it's just as important, I guess, but not quite the same. (F7)

The "+" responses were characterized by statements such as the following:

Yes, this is my life-line. It's the one place I feel affirmed in my desire to be *me* . . . (F10)

I couldn't do it without counseling and the therapist. It's all the more important now that we're separated. (F4)

I find I'm listening to Dr. S___ more carefully . . . (F1)

I think it's more important. I've seen Dr. S___ by myself, which I don't ordinarily do. And I look to him for guidance, I guess . . . (M2)

I'm more frank with my counselor now that I'm separated. (M3)

It's been important to me since I started, but even then I knew my marriage was in trouble, tho' I didn't want to admit it to my counselor, or even to myself I guess. (Pause.) Now? Coming here is the thing that sustains me. I feel supported rather than put down, and yet I always feel challenged too. Also, counseling is the most religious thing I'm doing these days. (M10)

Table 23 lists the results.

TABLE 23

COUNSELING: INCREASE IN IMPORTANCE $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ DECREASE IN IMPORTANCE

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Results
Females	9	1	0		
Males	10	0	0		
Totals	19	1	0	$\chi^2 = 19.00000$ $Z = 4.35890$ $p < .0002$	Exact Probability (p) < 1.00000

The Chi-Square results elucidated an extremely significant tendency ($p < .001$) for the respondents to depict a marked increase in the importance which counseling involvement occupies in their identity as separated spouses. The Fisher's Exact Test result was not significant.

CATEGORY 23 (ID12): PERSONAL GOALS: CHANGE VIS-A-VIS NO CHANGE

The final question asked was "As a separated person, have you made any changes in your personal goals?" Four of the subjects requested clarification of the term "personal goals"; the interviewer's response was "Whatever it means to you is okay." The intent of this enquiry was to learn something of the respondents' values and meanings, and whether their separations had facilitated changes in those inner dynamics. "+" was used by the coders to represent definite change, and "-" to report that no particular change was articulated. Some "+" responses were

Yes. This may seem like a small change, but it's a big thing to me: I'm determined to try to learn to take risks. To go after what I want. (F8)

To please *me*, instead of my wife, my mother, my father, the parishioners in my church and everybody else under the sun at the expense of my own needs being unmet. (M10)

Yes, I have several new things I intend to go after. One is socialization within the church, which involves going regularly and getting involved with people and with things the church is into. Then there's the goal to grow, but that's not a very operational goal. But I'm into the feelings of that . . . maybe it would be more right to say 'to experience' a lot of new things I've never had the courage to try, and some I want to go back to with a more evaluative attitude towards myself. (M5)

The "—" replies were typified by

J___ (her counselor) asked me that once too. No. I don't even think about it. If you want to you could call that escaping reality . . . but I don't. I don't plan my life. If I made plans I might have to try to live up to them. And how would I feel if I didn't? I really don't want to go through that. (Pause.) (Laugh.) I guess I fall short when it comes to goals. I know that upsets J___. I don't think I have set any or have any desire to set any. My only fault . . . (Laugh.) But I honestly don't feel upset about it. (F7)

The results for the final category (ID12) are listed in Table

24.

TABLE 24

PERSONAL GOALS: CHANGE $\Rightarrow$ $\Leftarrow$ NO CHANGE

	+	0	-	χ^2 Results	Fisher's Exact Result
Females	9	0	1		
Males	8	0	2		
Totals	17	0	3	$\chi^2 = 9.80000$ $Z = 3.13050$ $p < .0018$	Exact Probability (p) $< .50000$

The Chi-Square results showed that there was a very significant tendency (at the $p < .002$ level) for the respondents to refocus personal goals as their identity is redefined in separation. On the contrary, the Fisher's Exact Test result was not significant ($p < .50$); gender appear to have no effect on the trend in this category.

IV. SUMMARY

The twenty interview transcriptions were coded and charted according to their 23 categorical emphases, 11 of which represented elements of life style (Appendix B) and 12 of which attempted to discern identity factors (Appendix C). The results were processed using both a Chi-Square Test and a Fisher's Exact Test. Chapter IV attempted to describe the categories and the test results in detail, category by category.

Table 25 depicts the cumulative Chi-Square (χ^2) results cumulatively according to relative significance.

Table 26 lists the cumulative Fisher's Exact Test results according to relative significance.

The Chi-Square Test was used to analyze the results for the entire sample (Table 25). Exclusive of the findings that approached significance, it revealed significance ($p < .05$, $p < .01$, and in one case, $p < .001$) in five of the eleven life style categories. There was a significant tendency for the separated spouses to report increases in their personal and/or household maintenance behaviors. Also indicated (as extremely significant) were tendencies for subjects to make

TABLE 25

CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS (GROSS)

	Life Style Categories	Identity Categories	Totals
Not Significant (p greater than .10)	3	2	5
Nearly Significant ($p \leq .10$)	3	2	5
Significant ($p \leq .05$)	1	3	4
Very Significant ($p \leq .01$)	3	2	5
Extremely Significant ($p \leq .001$)	1	3	4
No. of Categories	11	12	23

vocationally-related behavior changes, and (as very significant) to lean on others for support in a heightened way, to increase their religious activities, and to do more reality-facing acts as functions of their life style as separated spouses.

The Fisher's Exact Test was used to determine whether males responded differently than females (Table 26). Again not including findings regarded as nearly significant, it demonstrated significance in two of the eleven life style categories, viz: the men described increases in tasks related to the upkeep of their person and home substantially more often than did the women, and they tended to change their sexual behavior in separation whereas the women did not.

TABLE 26

FISHER'S EXACT TEST RESULTS (GROSS)

	Life Style Categories	Identity Categories	Totals
Not Significant (p greater than .10)	7	8	15
Nearly Significant ($p < .10$)	2	2	4
Significant ($p < .05$)	0	1	1
Very Significant ($p < .01$)	1	1	2
Extremely Significant ($p < .001$)	1	0	1
No. of Categories	11	12	23

In the identity categories (which focused on covert, inner changes), the Chi-Square Test showed significance for eight of the twelve areas of investigation. Significant results included ID4 (a moving towards the development and utilization of more coping resources within oneself); ID8 (increased anxiety); and ID10 (inner pain as the primary motive for working at one's growth). Very significant results related to ID5 (identity diffusion) and ID12 (the rethinking and re-focusing of personal goals). Three categories' χ^2 results were extremely significant: ID3 (feelings and perceptions of transitoriness); ID7 (a heightened sense of mistrust); and ID11 (a marked increase in the importance assigned to the subject's relationship to and

involvement with his counselor).

On the other hand, the Fisher's Exact Test results revealed significance at the $p \leq .05$ level or better for only two of the twelve identity categories. To elaborate, the male half of the sample evidenced very significantly more of a tendency towards depression than did the females, and they attributed to themselves significantly more anxiety.

Considered as a whole, the χ^2 and Fisher's Exact Tests evidenced significances at the $p \leq .05$ level or better in 17 instances, out of 46 possibilities. In addition, there were 9 resultant statistical figures that were nearly significant ($p \leq .10$).

CHAPTER V

PERSPECTIVES ON THERAPEUTIC MARITAL SEPARATION FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE PASTORAL MARRIAGE COUNSELOR

I. INTRODUCTION

Chapter IV may be seen as the "micro" chapter--a descriptive presentation in fine detail of cumulative data resulting from the researcher's interviews. The present chapter attempts the portrayal of a "macro" literary portrait--a characterization of the therapeutic separation phenomenon from the perspective of pastoral marriage counseling. The results elucidated in the previous chapter are discussed more expansively and pictorially, with particular emphasis on their value in amplifying the minister's (or counselor's) understandings of what happens when a person enters marriage counseling and then separates from his spouse. The intent was not to attempt to depict separation exhaustively, since the research for this study was only exploratory and the sample narrow.

The first section of the chapter consists of the presentation of two cases--one male and one female separated spouse--based on two interviewees' transcribed responses to the 23 categories of enquiry, responses which followed rather closely the response tendencies reported in Chapter IV. The second part of the chapter reflects upon the perceptual (identity-related) and overtly behavioral (life style-related) differences between the male and female model cases. The final portion

of the chapter evaluates the therapeutic separation experiences from the standpoint of religion and the church.

II. THE EXPERIENCE OF THERAPEUTIC MARITAL SEPARATION ILLUSTRATED

The two case studies which follow illustrate the typical separated spouses' experiences and perceptions as described by the subjects of the present research.

There was, of course, no "typical" respondent. No interviewee exemplified all of the demographic averages, nor did anyone report all of the tendencies revealed by the statistical analyses of resultant data. However, subjects F9 and M6 were sufficiently close to the means and norms to merit their selection as the bases for illustrative case presentations.

The Fisher's Exact Test results revealed substantial enough differential responses on the part of men as opposed to women to necessitate separate presentations characterizing the male and female halves of the sample.

Background material included in the case presentations was garnered from the Interfaith Counseling Service client files on F9 and M6. All names are, of course, fictitious, to preserve confidentiality.

Sarah McKenzie

Sarah McKenzie is a 33-year-old housewife and the mother of a 7-year-old daughter and a 3-year-old son. She and her husband Ed were married 13 years ago. Sarah has two years of college and an A.A. degree, but she has not worked since she and Ed were married. Before

marrying she was employed as a bookkeeper for about two years.

The McKenzie marriage hasn't been well for several years--at least since the birth of their first child. Sarah now says "I'm not sure whether I ever really loved Ed. I sure *thought* I did at one time. . . ."

Sarah had gone to talk to her minister about her "moodiness" from time to time in the past; but about three months ago the Rev. Johnson had reacted differently than before. He told Sarah that he had noticed her depressions occurring more frequently, lasting longer, and seeming deeper during the past year. Sarah admitted that was so, " . . . but I don't know why, or what to do about it," and she wept openly for several minutes in the pastor's study.

A couple of days later, pastor Johnson called and asked how Sarah was doing. "Not so good" was the reply. At that point the minister said that while he cared about Sarah very much, he felt unable to help her with what he saw as an increasingly serious problem. He suggested that she call Interfaith Counseling Service--"there are several ministers there who are friends of mine and who have special training in helping people just like you." Sarah agreed to call for an appointment.

Later that same week she met Dr. Stevens for the first time. She liked him immediately; he seemed to understand her. He assured her that it was not unusual to be depressed, and arranged to work with her on a weekly basis.

After Sarah had asked Ed to accompany her to counseling a

couple of times, Dr. Stevens (with Sarah's consent) phoned Ed to ask whether he would come to share his perceptions of the situation and to help Sarah. Ed agreed to come. However, after a single counseling session Ed decided not to return. "If you think you need this, go ahead and go," he said, "but as far as I'm concerned it's a waste of time."

Sarah reported that as the weeks went by

I started to wise up to the fact that I was a person with feelings and needs, and I sure wasn't getting my feelings paid attention to or my needs either. Dr. Stevens encouraged me to express myself more at home instead of always holding it all inside of me, but when I tried to do that Ed would throw up his hands and stalk out of the house mad. A couple of times he was gone all night. I still don't know where . . .

When Sarah subsequently came to her counseling session "scared to death I'm going to end up divorced, and I *don't* want to lose my marriage," Dr. Stevens' response shocked her. "What marriage?" he said. After discussing her options with her counselor, Sarah asked Ed the very next evening if he would move out for a while.

I told him I thought I needed a trial separation, that I had no plans to file for divorce, that I just needed sometime to sort things out and work on my problems . . . to find out who I am and that I just didn't feel I could do that with him around the house to get mad and walk out every time I tried to speak up for myself.

The following weekend, Ed moved into an apartment.

At the point of the interview for this study, Sarah and Ed had been separated for 6-1/2 weeks. She stated that she did not know how long the separation might last, " . . . but Ed won't come in for counseling yet, and I just can't take him back until he at least agrees to that."

Sarah's life style had changed considerably since the separation, "much more than I expected." She described the following overt phenomena (in categorical order as per the interview format):

I've lost weight, and not on purpose either. I don't purposely vomit. It's just nerves, I know that, and it's not happening every day anymore . . . but it surprised me.

My habits have gotten sloppy. I eat less. Food just doesn't appeal to me. I usually try to force down instant breakfast, because some days that's about the only nutritious thing I eat all day. (Pause.) I have some Valium which my doctor gave me; I'm supposed to take it three times a day, but I don't want to get hooked on pills, so I take it rather irregularly, mostly just to help me get to sleep at night.

. . . I guess I've tightened up a bit when it comes to money. I'm not dumb--I figured I ought to know where I stand legally, so I sought a lawyer's advice. I'm trying to take care of myself and my children in case things don't work out. But I'm not out to take him or to be vindictive. After all, I'm the one who wanted this.

I'm taking the garbage out now. (Pause.) That's about the *only* job I'm doing now that I wasn't doing anyway. Ed did very little around the house except fix something to save money . . . he hated to pay a plumber, and I've had to do that once . . .

I think I feel a little guilty for doing this to my children, although Dr. Stevens said I wasn't doing them any favors lying around the house depressed all the time either. But I'm spending less time with them now than before--could that be because I feel guilty?

I'm really doing nothing that I'd classify as social or recreational right now. I have a couple of people I see. One woman has been through some of the same thing I'm going through right now, including going to counseling, only she's been through even worse, because she's divorced. (Pause.) I'm not a blabbermouth, but she understands how I feel inside. If I told anyone else how I feel inside it might sound like I'm a basket case for sure. We have a good relationship . . . I mean she has been a terrific help but we're friends too. (Pause.) My husband wanted to take me out to dinner one night so I went, but like I say, I don't eat. I had a miserable time being lectured through the whole dinner . . .

I pray a whole lot more. . . . I feel a very definite lack within me, a real spiritual need. I'm not fanatical, but I'm doing some reading too. This month I read Marjorie Holmes' book *I've Got to Talk to Somebody, God*. It helped. I kind of thought God had forsaken me. I sound awful pious, don't I? (Chuckle.) I'm not really, but I really thought 'I think even God's forsaken me.' (Pause.) None of my friends would say something like that. . . . I'm praying that we may get a better understanding of each other and a sound marriage. And sometimes I just pray for whatever God wants to happen . . . but I can't believe He wants us to not make it.

Well (appearing embarrassed) Ed . . . I've slept with my husband once. But I haven't pursued any outside activities. I don't have any desire for anyone else. In fact, I don't have much desire for it period.

. . . I've set aside this year to go back to work part-time and to go to college in the fall. I mean regardless of what happens to my marriage. (Pause.) I saw my role for the last three years as being home--I thought that was important. But perhaps I became sort of a non-person. It's true that doing things for Ed has given me joy at home . . . even ironing his shirts. But I also like the academic world; I always liked school and books. So now I'm determined to do something about it.

Like I said, there's this one woman. And then of course Dr. Stevens.

. . . Yes, that's new. I never used to talk about my feelings to anybody. Except Reverend Johnson, and I still talk to him. In fact, he calls me at least once a week just to say hello and ask how I'm getting along.

I think I'm facing reality more than I ever have. Ever. I think that I'm more capable of facing it since I sought professional help, than I would have been say six weeks ago. Of course when the time comes right down to it, how does any of us know how we will react? But I don't think I'm going to curl up and die anymore, though I may still feel like it. But I'm trying to face reality.

Sarah's identity had also undergone trauma and allegedly was now quite different than prior to her separation from Ed. In the interview, she responded to the identity-related enquiries as follows:

I'd have to say I am more bound, because of my children. In this particular moment when I'm in much better shape than last week I feel somewhat like--as my husband has been saying

so currently--'That's my prerogative.' But otherwise my feeling is much more of duty and being bound, because of my children. Like I may have a lifetime obligation ahead of me. Kind of frightening . . . There's no option about that. I'm going to raise those kids. That is, if that's the way it has to be, if we part ways. Oh, I just hate that word 'divorce.' I'm trying to avoid it. I feel like I'm being pessimistic when I even think that way.

I don't think I've noticed any change in that. I feel I do want closeness with this one woman, and it's very deep with her. We had just gotten to know each other well a couple of weeks when Ed left, so I called her and said 'I need you' and she said 'I'll be there in five minutes.' But I guess with everybody else except with her, it's stayed about the same, although some people that we never were with except together I've just stayed away from entirely.

A week ago I would have said that it wouldn't be unusual for it to go on to months, but I couldn't work at it that long. I like to feel that it's a short-term separation. But there again it isn't my decision. I'm just in limbo. It's all Ed's decision. . . . I would need both of us working at it--not just me.

I'd have to say more on the outside. I don't know if you know what happened to me yesterday, but yesterday when I walked in here and found out that I didn't have an appointment--there'd been a mix-up--anyway, when I found that out I just fell apart. That had buoyed me up so much, just to think that I had somebody to talk to . . . Fortunately I went on to see the pastor and he had time, so that made everything okay.

Who is Sarah McKenzie? (Pause.) I'm not sure. Sort of a shambles. (Chuckle.) Well, not really. I do think I'm competent enough to go back to school. And I *am* just starting to see myself as a worthwhile person. (Pause.) And I think I'm the one who can raise my children in the best manner that is possible under the circumstances. But it is hard to say who Sarah McKenzie is without Ed . . .

Oh, more depression. Hurt. A different kind of depression than I used to have before we separated . . . a deep, deep hurt that I've never known even when our baby died. (Tears.) I thought that death was as much a blow as you can suffer, but I was wrong . . . I didn't think I could hurt as bad as I have over this thing. One time Dr. Stevens said there are a lot of people in here that hurt worse than I do and I was outraged at his statement and I thought 'How in the hell does he know how much I hurt?' (Pause.) Of course that was shortly after we separated--it was much worse then than it is today.

Distrustful. I would like to think that we will build trust in one another again. I don't know, he's never had any reason to not trust me, but there are reasons why I should not trust him --not affairs or anything. I feel I've been naive and that now I'm becoming more skeptical about everything--like I'm not wanting to get burned again.

I'm not relaxed at all. When I've had a few glasses of wine I can relax. But up to the present time it has been depression-induced anxiety ever since we separated. (Pause.) Right now I just feel all churned up in my stomach.

I guess I blame Ed, although I know it takes two, like Dr. Stevens said. But Ed moved to Arizona knowing we had some problems, because our family doctor advised us both to seek some help when we got here and he refused to do so. I do blame him in that respect--for letting it continue on so long and me getting more and more depressed and through all of it to--well, his lethargic response to anything.

Well, there's a lot of pain still there, but I'm starting to get that inner picture . . . I'd say mixed. Divorce, separation--they're so commonplace these days and I get the impression that many people see it as an easy out. I'm very strongly marriage and family oriented and have a strong desire to have a sound family unit. So this pain I'm experiencing now is forcing me to continue, I think. But I also know now that I want to seek my own self in terms of other things--academically primarily, right now, in terms of improving myself.

My involvement with Dr. Stevens has been important to me since the first time I saw him. But I'd say it has become all the more important now . . . like I said, that thing that happened yesterday where I just fell apart when I didn't have an appointment. That says it's terribly important.

Yes, somewhere along the line I'd like to get a degree--a real degree. I wish I wanted to teach because that would be ideal if I had to be alone--selfishly that would be an ideal situation for my children if I had to be alone. But I don't. I'll probably go for a degree in math, related to accounting. I'd say the other new goal is to be a good person in my own right. I think I've lived too much of my life for my husband, and you can't live your life for somebody else.

Bill Coleman

Bill Coleman is 38 years old. He is an architect, and the

father of two children, 11-year-old Billy and 8-year-old Jennifer. He and his wife Mary have been married for 13 years. Since going into business for himself six years ago, he has earned a substantial income.

Bill has had numerous extramarital affairs, although "nothing of a permanent nature--it's just that I'm a dirty old man." He says that he loved Mary very much when he married her, adding " . . . but I don't know what love means anymore, so maybe I didn't know then either."

Counseling began some five months ago for Bill, when he agreed to see Dr. Wellesley with Mary "to see if we still have a marriage." (Mary had been in a therapy group with Dr. Wellesley for over a year.)

After Bill had attended about six sessions with Mary, he rented a "bachelor pad" and moved into it "because I was feeling so damn guilty about what I was doing to this really fine girl--but I wasn't ready to quit doing it, so I decided the only honest thing to do was to get out." At that point, Bill began to see Dr. Wellesley alone each week, although the couple also met with the counselor together a couple of times "to get the details of the separation ironed out."

Bill had been separated from Mary for 13 weeks when he agreed to be interviewed for the research of this study. In contrast to Sarah McKenzie, Bill's responses were generally short and directly to the point, although he occasionally wandered from the issue at hand to talk about the effects of his separation on various aspects of his

business and professional life.

Bill's comments on the life style changes which had occurred since he separated from Mary were as follows:

It's been traumatic. I at one time had an ulcer and it doesn't take much to get my stomach nervous. After I left it really got to me and I became rather sick. My stomach is still almost always in a knot after all this time.

I'm drinking more, I'm smoking more, and I don't eat properly at all. I've got food at the apartment but I don't like to cook it because I don't like to wash the dishes so a lot of times I just don't eat. A lot of this goes back years and years because of the 'P.R.' work involved in my job. It requires meeting a client in a bar . . . (Pause.) After I reach a certain point in my drinking I could care less whether or not I eat. That's been happening a lot lately. Too much, I guess.

I've been spending freely, maybe as a kind of consolation prize. I've given her a lot too--much more than we agreed on in front of Dr. Wellesley. (Pause.) Essentially, what I've been saving for myself certainly isn't sufficient for a person to live on, even single. So I've relied on my business account. I've relied on credit cards for the business far more than I would have normally . . . I guess you could say I'm trying to scuttle Uncle Sam a bit to sustain myself.

I've got a furnished apartment and it's not that large, so I don't do a great deal to it. All I really do is wash a few dishes, dust once in a while, and wash the toilet and the sink. I clean it up about once a week, but I have yet to vacuum (laugh) or wash a window. I don't have many guests . . . so I can live with the filth. It's plain laziness. I never did anything around the house--I even hired the yard work out.

I'm *making* time for the kids for the first time ever . . .

I've made some real changes. I credit Dr. Wellesley with a lot of it. The big thing is that I've stopped messing with other women, and I'm spending more time with Mary in the last couple of months than I did in the last couple of years. If we had done that all along it would have helped our situation, but believe me, in this day and age it doesn't take much to get something going on the side. I think about it now and it's kind of frightening. So I don't know if I'm answering your question or not, but in terms of the way I think of recreational life I'm doing a hell of a lot less recreating, if you get my meaning.

I'm sure I'm praying a bit more . . . in fact, *quite* a bit more. Most of the time I think about Mary and ask for forgiveness and I'm also asking for His help in strengthening Mary and getting us back together again. (Pause.) That's about it--I have a rather disjointed view of religion, in that I don't feel like I have to go to church to be religious. I do think that it would be good for us to become church-going again for the children . . .

I've always been a horny old man, and I still am. But I have very definitely changed my behavior. I think it's because I have developed more compassion in regard to my concern to make Mary happy. (Pause.) I don't know if I should mention this or not but according to her, up until about a month ago she had never known what it was to feel a climax. I understand this is quite common, but of course it always knocks the hell out of you when you feel like you're the big stud. When I found out at first it knocked the hell out of me and I felt bad, but then I got to thinking about it and realized that part of it is my fault. So I'm working at learning how to do a better job of fulfilling my new goal of total sex in a total relationship. . . . no change in quantitative desire for sex; I'd like to have sex every day and sometimes in-between. But now I'm relieving myself in the shower like I used to do when I was a kid, instead of going after it with anybody that's handy.

I'm putting in far less hours. I can't say my work is of less concern to me . . . What has changed has been my own attitude. I'm just not letting . . . trying not to let a client walk all over me with the demand that we've just gotta have this. I feel that if I can't get it done, it's just tough--you've gotta wait. That's a real change! (Emphatic.) I cheated my family again and again because I couldn't say no to anybody. Now I'm learning.

For quite a while after I left I didn't lean on anybody, unless you count Dr. Wellesley. I think that was because of my guilt feelings--I think I figured I didn't have the *right* to lean on anybody. But now I'm doing quite a lot of talking--to my folks, to Mary's folks, and I guess most of my real letting loose of my guts these days has been with my secretary. She's happily married and all, but you get quite close--I don't mean sexually --to a secretary and this gal has been with me 2-1/2 years. I know I have to learn to spill the beans to somebody, and I like to see what the reaction is from a female standpoint . . . 'cause the man always wants to see it his way.

I think it's much more reality-oriented. (Pause.) The one thing is I still do escape into alcohol some, but no worse than before, and that's one of the things I want to work on next.

As did Sarah, Bill felt that his identity had changed quite radically as a product of his separation. In debriefing the interview informally following its conclusion, he characterized the shift as "I guess you could say that where I used to live to satisfy my gonads, I'm working on realizing higher goals now." In the interview itself, Bill's identity-category responses included:

I could have more freedom than ever if I wanted to exert that freedom. But right now I have to say that I feel more trapped, because right now I know what I want but I can't get her to concur yet. (Pause.) Let's face it, the woman in separation has it a hell of a lot better than the man. She doesn't experience loneliness, or at least the same type of loneliness. I sit there and look at four walls a lot of time, and she at least has the kids to break the monotony . . .

I want to be closer . . . to be near somebody. I miss people. I'm a gregarious person. I don't enjoy being all alone. I never have. But I'm especially lonely these days. I'm an only child, and it's like I used to feel as a kid.

This is a stepping off place, or maybe better a stopping off place. I sure wouldn't want to *live* here . . .

I'd say I'm concentrating my energy on my own strength. I know in my own mind that there are only two people who can solve the problem . . . by joint understanding and sincere effort. I created my own problems, and Mary created her own problems. Anything I can get from anyone of an advisory nature, I'm going to have to implement it anyway.

I'm a lot less sure of that than I used to be. I used to be able to tell you *exactly* who I was. There are a lot of things that are a hell of a lot more important to me than they used to be, and a lot of things that are a hell of a lot less important. I'm learning that things can't just go my way all of the time . . . I guess you'd say I'm a lot less egotistical than I used to be.

I'd say it's definitely a depression. And I'm not used to that. But that's what I'd call it. Particularly now when you're trying your guts out to get back together and the other party isn't responding the way you wish they would because they don't trust you anymore. It's a sickening feeling.

No . . . *distrustful*. I've conned a lot of people--especially girls--and I've been conned a lot too. I suppose that between Mary and me there will be a certain amount of lack of trust for some time. She's developed a certain amount of independence and she even stated that maybe she'd like to try and date a little bit. That scares me, because I know how I operated and I don't trust any other guy to operate any differently . . .

I'm more anxious--particularly the last couple of weeks.
 . . . not anxious to walk back into something that won't work
 . . . but just generally antsy and nervous.

For where I find myself right at the moment, Mary is (responsible) . . . I think I've pretty well laid it on the line for her that I've made some mistakes, I can't undo them, there's just no way that you can undo them now and I've tried to assure her that they're not going to happen again. But just try to talk logic to a female at a time like this. It's very difficult.

I think that anybody would have to admit a certain amount of pain. It affects me mentally. . . . I want to be back as a unit. I'd like to have the opportunity to show that I've seriously done some very deep thinking. I'm afraid I might not get that chance, and that gives me a lot of pain.

Counseling has been good for me--better than I thought originally. Dr. Wellesley has been good for me. . . . that's something, for me to say that . . . because I've hated that man at times.

. . . my only goal used to be to be wealthy, although I still wouldn't knock it. (Smile.) But I want more to be respected, in my work, in my family, and by others. I also feel that I would like to devote more time to my family, not necessarily giving them everything they want, but doing things together, something that would strengthen them and would strengthen me. (Pause.) And I want a chance to make Mary happy . . . that's a goal too.

The interviews of Bill and Sarah were presented in the form of uninterrupted sequential verbatim response-segments in order to afford an impressionistic portrait in some depth of the life style and identity positions of two fairly articulate and somewhat "typical" respondents to the study. The reader may want to consult the interview format (Appendix A) to correlate the responses with the questions which

stimulated them.

III. PERSPECTIVES ON MARITAL SEPARATION: MEN AND WOMEN DIFFERENTIATED

In the cases of Bill Coleman and Sarah McKenzie, the Chi-Square and Fisher's Exact Test results reported in the previous chapter have come to life. It should be noted that in many instances both Bill and Sarah behaved or felt or thought the same way, illustrating the overall sample tendencies. But there were also differences, differences that are significant because the Fisher's Exact Test findings indicate that these differences correlate with their gender.

The male-female differentials are highlighted here. It is not the intent of this study to speculate as to why men and women subjects tended to respond in contrasting ways to the same stimuli, although such inferences might make interesting causative hypotheses to be tested in another research project. It is appropriate, however, to note in passing that a substantial body of literature related to the feminist movement is currently emerging. Some of those writings speak eloquently to similar differences between the sexes as those described in the present research. For example, Judith Bardwick, a psychologist, alleges that for the contemporary American woman the failure of her marriage to remain intact is "the failure of 'affiliation achievement,' characteristically a woman's most important source of esteem."¹ Bardwick

¹Judith M. Bardwick, *Psychology of Women: A Study of Bio-Cultural Conflicts* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 213.

further believes that

For the woman who never really confronted questions of her own identity, who went from the role-identity of daughter to that of wife, divorce may be the first time, in her aloneness and failure, that she confronts the issue of her values, her needs, her goals.²

If Bardwick's hypothesis is correct, it is possible that the confrontation of which she writes may occur not only in divorce but also as a function of therapeutic marital separation as depicted in the present research. But if this is the case, then the confronting of issues of identity is not unique to women, for the Fisher's Exact Test results revealed no meaningful difference between men and women in the "Intact, Stable Identity in Tension with Identity Diffusion" category (Table 17); in fact, only in 4 of the 23 categories of enquiry were significant differences shown (at the $p \leq .05$ level or better). On the contrary, the researcher was surprised at the categorical results for the enquiry "Speaking as a separated spouse, I'd like you to respond in any way you want to to the question, 'Who is (subject's name)?'; in other words, how would you answer the question 'Who am I?' right now?" The only three responses manifesting a clearly defined identity were women, and the reverse had been imagined, viz. that male identities would respond to separation with less identity diffusion than female identities.

In addition, the female respondents tended more towards elation in separation than did the males, who tended towards depression (as did the sample as a whole; cf. Table 18). Second, some women subjects said

²*Ibid.*, p. 214.

they were enjoying handling money themselves as opposed to their husbands being in charge of financial matters pertaining to the marriage, although others admitted bitterness at their husbands' allotting them too little money to handle their responsibilities adequately in separation. Third, although the statistical analysis revealed no significant contrast in male-female utilization of outer resources (Table 11), it was the interviewer's impression that the women respondents found it easier to undertake increased "leaning behavior" as separated spouses than did the men. They also had a greater abundance of ongoing interpersonal relationships on which to lean, whereas several of the men had no ready-made network of support. Fourth, while in general the subjects spoke of reconciliation with their partners as a fervent desire, 50% of the females were exceptions to this trend. Bill Coleman's wife, F7, was one of these women. She spoke of

. . . vengefulness. I've become vengeful. He keeps trying to tell me that he's changing and that it could be such a good marriage. But I'm now at the point where I'm looking at the marriage after being loyal to it for a long time and admitting that it wasn't a good marriage then and I'm not sure it would be now. Now it's all well and good to say 'forgive and forget,' but if he's really changed so much let's see that for a while and have some commitments I can believe in. *Then* I'll make a decision as to whether I want a marriage with E____. I know that sounds cold and hard and hurts him, but I am very skeptical and may as well be honest about it. (F7)

The above descriptions may perhaps best be understood in the light of some recent research on "The Future of Marriage" by Jessie Bernard, a sociologist. In a recent interview reported in the *London Observer*, Bernard states that her findings have led her to conclude that most married men are far happier and in better physical and mental

health than their wives, needing the security and restraints of marriage for their emotional well-being more than do women.

The Fisher's Exact Test did show some significant differences between males and females, and the cases of Sarah and Bill verify some of those contrasts:

1. There was an extremely significant tendency for separated men to make behavioral changes in their sexual behavior and for the women interviewees to report no change. Thus, Sarah says "I don't have much desire for it (sex) period" and Bill, in contrast, reports " . . . now I'm relieving myself in the shower like I used to do when I was a kid."
2. A very significant tendency for the men to respond to separation differently than the women was shown in two investigative categories, viz. male increases in household and personal maintenance behaviors and in feelings of depression vis-a-vis elation. Bill and Sarah do not illustrate the male-female depression differential and as such do not characterize the sample tendency. But in tasks related to the upkeep of their homes, the contrast is clearly pictured: Bill avers that "I never did anything around the house," having just finished stating the tasks he now does to maintain his apartment; Sarah, on the other hand, says that since her husband did "very little" to help in the home, the only new task she has assimilated is carrying out the garbage.
3. At the level indicating significance ($p \leq .05$), a single item

stands out: separated males admitted to a higher degree of anxiety than did their female counterparts. Again in this identity-related area, Bill and Sarah both lean towards the anxiety pole of the anxiety-relaxation continuum. (Sarah is one of the 40% of the women reporting increased anxiety, whereas 90% of the men said that their anxiousness-level had heightened.)

4. Approaching significance were the tendencies of males to show more decrements in physical health, more deterioration in ingestive habits, more perceptions of themselves as in bondage, and more attitudes of blame towards their partners than did female subjects. However, it must be admitted that very little confidence may be placed in these $p < .10$ findings; Bill and Sarah do not reflect them, mirroring rather the χ^2 indicants applicable to the sample considered as a whole.

IV. THERAPEUTIC SEPARATION, RELIGION, AND THE CHURCH

The subjects for the present research were all church members. All of them had been married in the church. Each one of them had been active in the church at one time, and several were heavily involved right up to the time of their separations. In addition, 70% of them had entered counseling at Interfaith Counseling Service at the recommendation of a clergyman with whom they had periodic contact. Even on the part of the remaining 30%, who came by self-referral or from non-religious referral sources, the question, "Why did they choose a

pastoral counseling center?" must be asked.

The precise answer is unavailable, since the question "Why Interfaith Counseling Service?" was not included in the interviews. But pure happenstance is unlikely. There are many psychiatric and psychological marriage counselors in the Phoenix-Scottsdale area of Arizona. Nor is cost a particular issue, because the nearby community mental health center and Family Service Association offices employ the same sliding fee schedule as does Interfaith Counseling Service. It is a low level inference that this 30% of the sample also were religiously inclined.

Furthermore, Chapter IV reported the responses to the enquiry, "What effects has your being separated had on your religious life?" (pp. 60-62). To recapitulate briefly, 15% of the subjects indicated a decrease in the doing of religious activities since they separated, 15% said there had been no change, and 70% reported a definite *increase* in their religious behaviors as separated spouses. The increases included prayer, meditation, reading of the Bible and other religious materials, and the doing of acts of contrition, confession, penitence. The Chi-Square Test results showed the tendency for the respondents to increase their religion-oriented activities as very significant ($p < .01$).

Beyond these statistical facts, the interviewer's perceptions were that the respondents characteristically had feelings of loneliness, alienation, unforgiveness, anger, guilt, and so forth. But they also seemed to be hungrily "soul-searching"--seeking to find their way out

of their lost estate and to find values and meanings and goals that would sustain them and transform them to newness of life. And in general, the subjects wanted reconciliation--with their partners, with their families, with friends from whom they felt estranged, in some cases with their church, and in many cases with their God. The separated state thus provided fertile religious ground. Even the most worldly-wise and cynical of the male interviewees said

It's extraordinary for me to pray, and I have, several times. Given my history--I've had pretty negative feelings about my history with religion and the results of that, but--I've been willing to try anything. (M7)

However, in the midst of this heightening of religious zeal the following comments, though sometimes made in passing, stood out:

I'm finding excuses not to go to church on Sunday mornings . . . (F1)

I guess I feel a bit embarrassed because my pastor knows our marriage is in trouble. (F2)

. . . lately I've had a lot of doubts. (Long pause.) Frankly, I'm getting a little disgusted with the church. The church is so political and businesslike . . . (Pause . . . Tears.) I've spent 11 years--maybe I married him for the wrong reasons--but it's been nothing but hell. (More tears.) I've prayed about it to be the opposite . . . I'm confused--about my own feelings, about my feelings for my husband--and I never thought I'd be so confused about my feelings towards God because I need . . . well, like I believe in God. I know He's there. But I wonder why . . . it's probably me punishing myself . . . but I wonder why . . . why, why can't I find happiness? (F4)

I'm questioning a lot more--like whether there's a God or not and if there is, why doesn't He pay attention? (F6)

Counseling is kind of an answer to prayer. We went to conciliation court which didn't help at all. And we went to our minister but I knew that wasn't the answer; he gave a little sermon but he acted like he didn't have the time for us and there was just something missing. Don't get me wrong, I like him very much, but . . . so I asked him for where to go for the best counseling. (F7)

I'm sick of church--of all the phoniness, I guess. And of being bored. That's part of the reason I wanted to leave him. (F10)

The above are responses from the female half of the sample. The responses of the men include similar expressions:

You may not like this, but to me church is nothing but money-grubbing. They want 10% of your salary each month, but when you're in trouble and really need them they disappear. (M1)

I have not attended church since . . . (the separation) I don't like to go to church alone and sit by myself. (M2)

I haven't just quite been in the mood . . . to go to church and face all the questions. (M4)

I've stopped going to church for some reason. I have found myself praying more. (Pause.) I'm sort of saying two things there because at church would be where my friends should be. But I don't feel comfortable there these days . . . (M8)

The above subject-responses might easily be explained away on the grounds that these people are unjustifiably angry, or paranoid, or neurotically guilty--or perhaps that they have sinned against God and should feel guilty until they repent! But the facts that they are religiously inclined, working towards "salvation" and reconciliation, and doing more praying and other religious acts than prior to their separations, remain. Also remaining is the general impression that while increased religious behaviors had been of value to the subjects, the organized church *per se* had not since they became separated spouses. It is noteworthy that while most of the separatees' ministers were supportive of them and their counselors both before and during their separations, the pastor of one respondent telephoned the helping agency when he learned of the separation to demand an explanation as to why the marriage counseling had failed so miserably. .

Reflecting upon the review of literature related to "The Church and Marital Separation or Dissolution,"³ that literature tends to stand in judgment upon anything regarded as a marital rift. Further, separation is tacitly viewed as tantamount or a prelude to divorce. The possibility of separation facilitating increased personal, interpersonal, and religious awareness and growth is generally not recognized. The author agrees with Emerson⁴ in affirming that love as evidenced by faithful action is requisite to the establishing and sustaining of a spiritual unity that may properly be described as "Christian marriage," and that no such marriage can be preserved by form, force, law, or doctrine.⁵ When alienation and its attendant pain is present, healing and reconciliation are necessary to the rebirth of a relationship that may accurately be termed "marriage." Facilitation of such healing and reconciliation requires that judgment be tempered with grace--confrontation of irresponsible attitudes and actions with an attitude of unconditional positive regard, to borrow Carl Rogers' term. Bonnell does this well.⁶ All too often the beliefs and practices of religion and the church have not been perceived as gracious and accepting at all, even by those who are avowedly religious in their own beliefs and

³Chapter II, pp. 24-29.

⁴J. G. Emerson, Jr., *Divorce, the Church, and Remarriage* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961).

⁵Abstracted from *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶John Sutherland Bonnell, "Counseling with Divorced Persons," *Pastoral Psychology*, IX:85 (September 1958), 11-15.

practices.

The implications of the present study for pastoral marriage counseling will be discussed in Chapter VI.

V. SUMMARY

The experience of therapeutic marital separation has been discussed from the perspective of the pastoral marriage counselor, in the light of the findings of the present research. Literary portrayals of two exemplary separation cases were reflected upon with attention to differential responses between the male and female contingents of the sample. The interviewees' perceptions and activities related to religion were also reviewed and discussed from the standpoint of religion and the church.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The research reported in this dissertation was designed to discover, describe, and reflect upon some of the ways in which marital separation is perceived and experienced in the context of pastoral marriage counseling.

Appropriately, a review of literature related to the study was conducted. The literary search evidenced a poverty of material dealing with marital separation, verifying justification for some original research into the phenomenon and providing a valuable contextual backdrop to the study.

Twenty individuals participated in the research (ten females and ten males). All subjects were married parents who were in marriage counseling at Interfaith Counseling Service, a pastoral counseling center located in Scottsdale, Arizona. The subjects were also voluntarily separated from their spouses at the time of the interviews for this study.

An interview format was developed and pretested. The final form of the instrument was administered to the subjects by the interviewer-author between March 13 and July 9, 1972. The interviews were taped, transcribed, collated, and rated in each of 23 categorical response areas by two coders who worked independently. The ratings of

the coder and inter-coder were entered onto a master chart for further processing. The symbols "+", "0", and "-" were used as rating symbols, but only the "+" and "-" symbols were regarded as valid for data analysis, "0" constituting a neutral, indefinite, or "unable to decide" rating. In addition, only ratings where the "+" or "-" symbol was assigned by both coders were used in further data processing. (The coder and inter-coder agreed on 98.65% of the responses.)

The 23 categories of enquiry were designed to divide into two segments: 11 of the investigative areas sought descriptions of overt, observable behaviors and were named "life style" categories; the remaining 12 were designated "identity" categories and attempted to probe covert, inner (intra-psychic) behavior.

The coded and charted data was processed by both a Chi-Square (χ^2) Test and Fisher's Exact Test. The χ^2 Test was used to analyze category by category the results for the entire sample on the proportions in the "+" and "-" columns on the master chart. The Fisher's Exact Test was employed to determine whether there was a differential reaction of males as opposed to females in any category. The χ^2 Test revealed significance in 5 of the 11 life style categories and 8 of the 12 identity categories (13 of 23 *en toto*). The Fisher's Exact Test showed significant tendencies on the part of the men vis-a-vis the women in 2 of the 11 life style categories and also in 2 of the 12 identity categories (4 of 23).

To summarize the χ^2 findings, in the life style categories the significant results ($p < .05$ or better) evidenced the following: the

separated spouses tended to increase their personal and/or household maintenance tasks, to make vocationally-related behavior changes, to lean on other persons for support in a heightened way, to increase their religious activities, and to do more reality-oriented (as opposed to avoidance-oriented) acts as functions of their separations. In the identity categories, results at the $p \leq .05$ level of confidence were: a marked increase in the importance assigned to the subject's relationship with his counselor, a heightened sense of mistrust of people in general, feelings and perceptions of oneself as in transition, rethinking and refocusing of personal goals, identity diffusion, inner pain as the primary motive for working at personal and interpersonal growth, increased anxiety, and a moving towards the development and utilization of more coping resources within oneself.

While the Chi-Square Test results were meaningful indicants, the Fisher's Exact Test results on male-female differentiations were more compelling in that the null hypothesis that the males should have had the same number of "+" and "-" responses is more defensible than the χ^2 Test on the gross. Otherwise stated, the Fisher's Exact Test data was less subject to possible bias. It demonstrated significance in two life style categories: the males described increases in tasks related to the upkeep of their person and home substantially more often than did the females, and they tended to change their patterns of sexual behavior in separation while the women did not. In the identity-related investigative areas, the male subjects evidenced very significantly more of a tendency towards depression than did the

females, and they also attributed to themselves significantly more anxiety.

Chapter Five further described the characteristics of separated spousehood as viewed from the perspective of pastoral marriage counseling. In-depth case presentations of two of the sample respondents were followed by reflections upon the male-female differences. In addition to an explication of the Fisher's Exact Test results, it was indicated that identity diffusion was manifested more by males than by females, that females tended more towards elation and towards enjoying their increased responsibility for money-handling, that the women moved more readily into "leaning" relationships with persons perceived as supportive, and that the women were more open to the idea of long-term separation than were the men. In the closing section of the chapter, the focus was on the relationship of the subjects' attitudes and actions to religion and the church. It was pointed out that although all participants were religiously inclined and 70% of them reported manifest increases in religious behavior since the onset of their separations, they did not pursue organized religion (i.e. the institutional church) as an accepting and helpful matrix for their growth and development (with the exception of one subject). Rather, their heightened religious activities were done privately, the most oft-mentioned one being prayer.

Finally, this research was designed as an exploratory and descriptive study. Evaluation or the testing of causal hypotheses were not purposes of the investigation. However, the conclusions,

implications, and recommendations which follow are appropriate in that they have emerged as an outgrowth of the study.

II. CONCLUSIONS

Methodological Conclusions

The methodology used in this study was to have been a case study methodology. In that the volume of resultant data (152 pages of single-spaced interview transcriptions) proved too cumbersome to describe in pure case study form, an ancillary methodology including the use of descriptive statistics was called upon. Thus, the methodology became an amalgamation of the "survey method" and the "case study method." The ensuing report consisted of illustrated descriptions of how the separations being scrutinized were viewed and experienced by the subjects.

The sample was limited; it was decided that a relatively small sample interviewed in some depth was preferable to a larger sample investigated more superficially, in that this was an exploratory and "pioneer" study with no prior research to use as a precedent. Thus, participants had to be counselees in pastoral marriage counseling, married, parents, voluntarily separated from their spouses, and willing to talk with the interviewer.

The relatively high significance rate revealed by the data analysis gave credence to the research design as viable to the investigative concerns.

However, the methodology had weaknesses. First, there was no

control group. The researcher might well be accused of "interviewer bias," for there is no way to determine the degree to which he caused biased reporting, no matter how sincerely he tried not to. It might be suggested that the data was produced more by the author than by his subjects. There is no adequate defense against such a criticism.

Nonetheless, three responses are offered:

1. An inter-coder was secured and asked to read carefully the interview transcriptions, coding them on the basis of the same criteria and with the same symbols (+, 0, and -) as did the researcher. This was done to enhance the validity of the coding.
2. The usefulness of the case study method as an approach to research in marriage and the family has been well substantiated. Komarovsky, a well-known sociologist, states that

The case study method has its unique functions. The test of causal relationships between known and measurable variables is not one of them. Neither is the study of relative frequencies of some readily ascertainable facts.¹

However, Komarovsky defends the methodology as a most valuable way to:

- (1) suggest explanatory clues for empirical generalizations;
- (2) add support to--or withdraw support from--speculative assumptions held by authorities or by the general populus;
- (3) avoid the pitfall of most qualitative studies of attitudes or behaviors, viz. the compression of answers into the simple alternatives of yes or no without affording opportunity for

¹Mirra Komarovsky, *Blue-Collar Marriage* (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 347.

further elaboration by those interrogated;

(4) capture new patterns of relational responses, which requires a flexible and broad interview able to probe in some depth a number of processes; and, finally,

(5) come closer than can studies testing causal hypotheses to the complex reality of marital and familial interaction.²

3. It is doubted that a control group *per se* would have enhanced response validity very much, unless, e.g., a situation could have been devised to test responses of subjects undergoing *forced* separations against those of respondents with equally severe marital problems forced to live with their spouses. In that case the interview format would necessarily have assumed a different shape. Otherwise stated, there are too many variables to consider to assume that a control group would have been of great value.

Second, the methodology failed to include exploration of a crucial variable, viz. the relationship of the counselor to the counselee as it may have influenced the subject's decision to separate from his spouse. Thus, whether the separation was overtly or covertly recommended by the counselor (as opposed to being the client's own idea) is not known. A question like, "What caused you to decide to separate from your spouse?" could easily have been included in the introductory segment of the interview. It would also have been feasible to discuss this issue with the counselors of the respondents.

²Abstracted from *ibid.*, pp. 439-451.

Third, the sample is admittedly narrow, and skewed to include only persons in counseling, at a pastoral counseling center, and (as it happened, not by design) only middle-class whites between the ages of 22 and 43, and so forth. In this light, the author has avoided over-generalizing and has attempted to keep in focus the fact that this was a study of the impact of marital separation on middle-class white parents in pastoral marriage counseling. Whether the conclusions reported below apply to a wider population remains a matter for further investigation.

Conclusions Based on the Findings

A number of conclusions at a low level of inference may be drawn directly from the findings of the research.

First, an overarching conclusion is that many changes in identity and life style characteristically accompany therapeutic marital separations. The coding and charting of data from the 23 categories of investigation evidenced that change ("+", or "-") occurred in 421 of the 460 response possibilities (91.5%). Whatever the subjects were thinking, feeling, or doing in their lives at the point of interview, it was reported in 91-1/2% of their responses as a *change* from what they had been experiencing prior to separating from their partners.

Second, in contrast to what the author had anticipated, the changes in religious behavior were in 70% of the cases "+", i.e. *increases*. What allegedly caused these movements towards more religious acts, and what forms the acts assumed, varied considerably.

However, it must be concluded that the separated spouse, if he is religiously inclined at all, tends to hunger for--and actively seeks in a heightened way--means for the expression of his religious beliefs.

Third, no one's parental stance remained the same. Forty-five percent of the subjects saw the change which occurred as positive; 55% saw it as negative (e.g., less time spent with the children). It may be safely stated as a conclusion that marital separation is a change agent not only in the lives of the spouses but also in the lives of the children of the estranged pair, tending to either enhance the quantity and quality of father-child (or mother-child) relationships or --somewhat more often--diminish them.

Fourth, separation is viewed and experienced as transitory. One hundred percent of the sample subjects stated this. No respondent wanted to stay separated forever. No one wanted to remain in what they saw as a "limbo state"; there was a strong thrust towards resolution of the tension "in one direction or the other," as one respondent put it.

Fifth, separation tends to cause people to reevaluate and refocus their personal goals as their identity is diffused and redefined in view of their separation. A related conclusion, in terms of life style (overt behavior), is that separated spouses nearly invariably (at the $p < .001$ level of significance) make definite vocation-related behavioral changes as a functional response to their separations. This may take many forms--changing jobs, enrolling in school for further education, or seeking employment for the first time in years, to name

a few--but the conclusion appears equally applicable to both men and women.

However, sixth, it may be stated that males and females experience therapeutic marital separation somewhat differently. The Fisher's Exact Test results revealed (at the $p < .05$ level or better) that this was so in 4 of the 23 categories, and nearly so in an additional 4 categories. Considering only the most significant areas of enquiry, it must be concluded that therapeutically separated men become more depressed and more anxious than do their female counterparts, and they tend to change their sexual and household-related behaviors considerably more radically than do the women.

Seventh, separation is a time when one's trust level is low. In terms borrowed from Erikson, what basic trust there may have been gives way to basic mistrust. The results in Category 18 (ID7) reveal the tendency for extreme skepticism to prevail in separated spouses--doubts as to the trustworthiness of human relationships. Understandably, the study indicates that separation is also a time of anxiety, especially as regards the fear of not being able to achieve a satisfying relatedness with anyone.

Eighth, despite a general stance of mistrust, therapeutic marital separation is a state wherein there is more utilization of resource persons outside of oneself than before. This conclusion is based on the results of Category 10 (LS10), and appears to contradict the seventh conclusion articulated in the immediately preceding paragraph.

But a ninth conclusion explains the paradox. While separated spouses in their skepticism are narrowly selective of whom they trust, they become *intensely* involved with the persons they choose as confidantes. For instance, separation intensifies the counselor-counselee relationship; 95% of the respondents to the present survey depicted a marked increase in the importance which that relationship occupied in their lives since they became separated. It is interesting that in most cases (90%) persons chosen as confidantes by the separated spouses were of their gender, *except* for the counselors of the female half of the sample (all of whom happened to be men).

Other Conclusions

In addition to the above, some other conclusions may be inferred. While more conjectural, they may be useful to stimulate ideas for theory-building or further investigation.

First, in the author's judgment counseling tends to force people to face reality, attitudinally and behaviorally, even in the face of intense pain or frustration when the desire to avoid reality by escaping would seem "normal." This conclusion is supported both by Category 11 (LS11), in which 80% of the subjects reported that their behavior had become more reality-oriented since the onset of their separations, and by Category 20 (ID9), Category 21 (ID10), and Category 22 (ID11). The latter three response configurations seem to indicate that counseling tends to move people towards a self-responsible attitude as opposed to a blaming attitude, from the pain which provided the initial impetus to seek help towards (at least incipiently) a quest

for self-actualization, and that in the trauma of separation the counseling relationship is more influential than before. This leads to a second inferential conclusion, viz. that marital separation renders a counselee more receptive to the counselor's confrontations than the non-separated state. It may be argued that both of these conclusions are erroneous on the grounds (a) that the phenomena described occur in *every* separation whether the separatee is involved in a formal counseling relationship or not, and (b) that these phenomena occur in *all counseling* whether the counselee is separated or not. The author's experiences seem to be in contradistinction to this argumentation. Until proven otherwise, it seems safe to conclude that at the very least the phenomena described occur sooner in separation than in non-separation and more smoothly under the impetus of an ongoing relationship with a skilled counselor than in the absence of such a relationship. In short, to the degree that it is true that growth (whether towards more responsible behavior or towards heightened self-understanding) occurs maximally in those teachable moments when irresolution is experienced, the separated spouse is particularly vulnerable to learning if learning is accessible.

A third conjectural conclusion is that the 70% of the sample who were married to other sample respondents could anticipate a more positive prognosis for eventual reconciliation than the remaining 30%, all of whose partners were *uninvolved* in counseling by choice. To elaborate, the typical pattern of the subjects' pilgrimage was that while they were still living together, one spouse sought counseling.

The other partner was then encouraged to accompany his mate to future counseling interviews. Some did so, others elected not to. There is no firm data on which to base this third conclusion, since the focus of the present research was individualistic rather than relational, but it is strongly suspected that the prognosis for the marriages of those whose spouses would not involve themselves in counseling would necessarily be much more guarded than if both husband and wife chose counseling and chose separation as a therapeutic vehicle for themselves.

Finally, it is concluded that the tendency towards premature closure of the marital wound is quite strong. A considerable number of the subjects indicated that either they or their spouse wanted to reconcile but the other spouse and/or the counselor had discouraged it on the ground that to move back together before the corrective "surgery" that had precipitated the separation was accomplished would be a mistake. One subject said " . . . that was about a month ago, and now I'm so thankful that I didn't take him back when he wanted it so much, because a lot of other things have come to light." (F7)

In drawing this section to a close, it is interesting to reflect upon the literary review of Chapter II in the light of the findings. Two conclusions stand out. In the first place, the research revealed in bold relief the glaring lack of organismic awareness on the part of Bergler, who boldly posits the idea that problems do not lie in a marriage itself but in the neurotic mental state of the persons entering marriage.³ The results of the present study indicate

³Edmund Bergler, *Divorce Won't Help* (New York: Hart, 1948).

that in many cases it is not so much the neuroses of the individual spouses that cause problems between them as it is their respective male or female cultural conditioning plus the configuration--in effect, a new "person"--that results when a particular pair of unique individuals choose to live in marriage. In some instances, the two are simply unable to successfully negotiate all of the "contracts" necessary to the sustenance of a long-term relationship. The author stands with Winter,⁴ and to some extent with Havemann,⁵ in believing that perceptions and behaviors are learned and can be changed under the impetus of re-education plus the removal of the learner from the relational matrix that tends to foster the perpetuation of self-defeating attitudes and actions.

In the second place, the study points to the conclusion that marital separation in general, and therapeutic marital separation in particular, need to be treated more extensively both in literature which purports to present a comprehensive overview of counseling theory and practice, and by those writers who focus especially on marriage and family concerns.

III. IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL MARRIAGE COUNSELING

The following implications of this study to the minister-

⁴Gibson Winter, *Love and Conflict* (New York: Doubleday, 1958).

⁵E. Havemann, *Men, Women, and Marriage* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962).

counselor are merely suggestive. They must, of course, be evaluated in the light of the counseling clergyman's theological and psychotherapeutic postures towards persons and towards God, as well as in view of his counseling expertise.

First, the study seems to indicate the need for greater referral skills on the part of the counseling pastor. In the opinion of the author, many of the subjects were sustained for too long a time by their ministers, until the realization came that the marriage was indeed in serious trouble. The respondents expressed quite consistently an embarrassment at the thought of discussing some of the issues crucial to their marital difficulties (such as the inability to achieve sexual orgasm) with their pastor. The parish minister who engages in marriage counseling must be sensitive to the dynamics of the pastor-parishioner relationship, and to the fact that while he may be the most readily available professional to be consulted regarding the growing unhappiness of a couple, he is not always the most logical source of help. Skills in when, how, and to whom to refer can be gained--there is literature on the subject--but greater sensitivity to the *need* for referral is implied by the results of the present research.

Second, the need for a more accepting, supportive stance *when separation occurs* is implied. The marital separation phenomenon is common in contemporary society, and one might assume that persons who purport to be "Christian," and the clergyman in particular, would be moved with compassionate support whenever a marital crisis occurs among their people. The study revealed no such tendency. On the contrary,

the subjects tended to have to *seek* relationships on which they could lean rather than having offers of friendship and support. While it is acknowledged that the respondents themselves tended to withdraw from social relationships and from active participation in the life of the institutional church, the findings should heighten the minister-counselor's awareness that separatees often experience loneliness, guilt, and embarrassment at what has happened, but at the same time they are hungering for a deepening of their faith.

Third, the minister-counselor must not foster the assessing of blame nor permit the "easy answer," such as a premature decision to divorce or "remarry." Perhaps the primary value of counseling to the separated spouse is the relational admixture it affords; a loving attitude that conveys to the counselee that he is precious, coupled with persistent frustration of his tendency to run from reality in deference to confrontation of his need to own the proper share of his responsibility for his present life position. There is also the assurance that the counselee can change his attitudes and actions in directions that will bring fulfillment, and the challenge to him to do so. This does not entail advice-giving nor the imposition of the pastoral counselor's "program" on the separatee. Whether reconciliation or dissolution were indicated as eventual outcomes was not a concern of this study nor of the counselors of the respondents. The concern was for the client *as a person*, that he might grow and develop into a happier human being infused maximally with "fulness of life" (John 10:10). The respondents to this research appeared to be moving in that direction.

Fourth, the differences revealed between the males and females interviewed for this research imply that the minister-counselor must be sensitive to the strong possibility that the separated husband may be more anxious, more depressed, experiencing more physical malaise, and doing more new or unfamiliar things than the separated wife (who has often been viewed by the counselor as the "helpless" one). Of course, both separated husbands and separated wives need supportive grace coupled with honest confrontation; but care must be taken *not* to assume that the separated male requires less attention. The reverse appears to be true.

Finally, separation as described in the present study is in and of itself a "neutral" phenomenon. It is neither right nor wrong, neither white nor black, neither good nor bad. With one exception (all subjects perceived the state as transitory) each category had mixed responses. Where one spouse felt the separation as a "freeing" experience, another experienced more "bondage." Where one became more depressed, another was elated. Where one parent saw the separation as "simply awful for the children," another reported that his relationship with his child had never been so frequent or so intense. The minister-counselor must exercise extreme caution to avoid the assumption of a prejudicial stance. A marital separation may be "too bad," as one clergyman said to this author, or it may be the most therapeutic or growth-producing life experience in the separatee's personal history.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

An ideal study of marital separation which the author would

very much like to undertake in the future would be a longitudinal study, wherein an in-depth interview would be conducted at specific intervals during the subjects' separations. This would be logistically difficult in view of the transitory nature of the phenomenon and the strong thrust towards resolution inherent in the separated state. Perhaps the interviews could be conducted at (1) two weeks, (2) six weeks, (3) ten weeks, and (4) fourteen weeks into the separations, beginning the research with a sizable sample in recognition of the high probability that only a portion of the subjects would remain separated throughout the 14-week period. But though there are difficulties, such a study ought to be done. The categorical data indicated that this would be particularly valuable in the following investigative areas:

1. The χ^2 results revealed a tendency towards a decrement in social or recreational activities on the part of the respondents. However, the average length of separation at the time of the interview was six weeks. A longitudinal study would afford insight into whether this decrement would continue. The researcher observed less of a tendency to report social-recreational isolation on the part of those who had been separated for a longer period of time than the mean, which leads to a formulation of the hypothesis that the tendency would not continue.
2. The same principal applies to the eighth life style category, having to do with sexual behavior. At the point of the research interviews, the women respondents were primarily sexually "numb" and

invariably articulated (or at least alluded to) a rigid moral code. The one female subject who had undertaken the risk of new sexual behavior (F4) had just begun, after 6 weeks of separation, to experiment with masturbation for the first time in her life. The sexual change which characterized the men, on the other hand, was usually a combination of their no longer being able to have sex with their wives and (in the words of M1, who said it with a nervous laugh), "I'm back to do-it-yourselfing." What trends would occur at the ten or fourteen-week point in the separations remains to be investigated.

3. Category 17 (ID6) dealt with the identity-related tension between depression and elation. The tendency of the sample subjects was towards the depression end of the continuum, but this area of enquiry is particularly needful of a longitudinal perspective.
4. The identity categories in general (particularly freedom $\rightleftharpoons$ $\leftleftharpoons$ bondage, anxiety $\rightleftharpoons$ $\leftleftharpoons$ relaxation, distance $\rightleftharpoons$ $\leftleftharpoons$ closeness, and mistrust $\rightleftharpoons$ $\leftleftharpoons$ trustfulness) would all benefit greatly from a treatment that would permit observation of changes that occur over an extended period of time.
5. Perhaps the chief value of a longitudinal study would be the possibility of testing the author's emerging hypotheses with respect to the role of counseling in relation to separation. E.g., the hypothesis "Counseling tends to move persons towards a self-responsible stance towards life as opposed to their former blaming attitude" could be tested, as could the thesis that "Whether they

divorce or reconcile, their being in counseling will force the separatees to face reality and make a self-affirming choice." The latter could be tested by means of comparative responses to the categories related to vocational behaviors and personal goals.

6. Another worthwhile project would entail the interviewing of counselors to ascertain their views on marital separation and to learn whether covertly or overtly a given counselor facilitates or suggests separation to his clientele, and if so under what circumstances. Related to this area of investigation is the question "What is the impact of the counselor's attitudes and techniques on the counselee's perceptions and actions?" It is tentatively hypothesized that counselors do indeed "break up marriages" in the sense that implicitly or explicitly separation is often a recommended therapeutic procedure.
7. Another research project to follow up the present one would be a study comparing the marital separation experiences of persons in counseling with those of persons who are also in therapy and who also have severe marital problems but who do *not* separate. The author's experiences in doing pastoral marriage counseling with many such couples leads to the hypothesis that change and growth would occur more slowly and less radically in the latter group, but that hypothesis would need to be proved or disproved. Again, a longitudinal study would be appropriate.
8. Still another interesting project would be a comparison of subjects such as those in the present sample with other separated spouses

who meet all other participant criteria but who are in counseling with a non-pastorally-oriented counselor and who have no strong religious ties. Whether the religious inclinations of the present subjects had a bearing on their willingness to endure the anxiety and pain of separation for as long a period as they did remains an unknown at the moment.

9. Another hypothesis that could readily be tested in a follow-up study is "Children are a crucial variable in marital separation, in that their existence causes the involved spouses to give up on their marriage less readily than if they were childless." A parallel study to the present one could be done on persons who meet all other sample criteria but who have no children.
10. Still another useful study would involve the comparison of the marital outcomes of separated *couples* in counseling with the marital outcomes of separated *individuals* whose spouses chose not to seek counseling. Seventy percent of the present study's subjects were married to each other, whereas 30% of the respondents had "non-cooperative" spouses--spouses who were not involved in counseling. A similar study could be conducted wherein the percentages were 50-50 and with a focus on the marriages of the subjects rather than simply on individual identities and life styles. The hypothesis that the involvement of both separated spouses in counseling slants the prognosis for the marriage more towards reconciliation than if only one spouse is involved in counseling could thus be tested, if the comparative study were sufficiently longitudinal to

include thorough follow-up.

11. A final suggestion for a research project would be to test the hypothesis that covert changes precede overt changes--that shifts in the focii of one's identity precede changing of his life styles. Or, the reverse could be hypothesized--that changes in overt behaviors as a function of marital separation foster changes in one's perceptions, feelings, and attitudes. This would again require a longitudinal study in which the "identity category" and "life style category" responses of the same subjects were compared against each other at various time-points in separations sustained over an extended period.

In general, it is the author's opinion that the whole field of marital separation (as opposed to divorce) remains wide open to sound empirical investigation. It is hoped that further efforts will be expended in such study.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

DATE OF INTERVIEW _____ SUBJECT NAME _____
MALE _____ FEMALE _____ CODE NO. _____ AGE _____ HOW LONG MARRIED _____
MISCELLANEOUS: CHILDREN: HOW MANY? _____ AGES _____
HOW LONG SEPARATED? _____
THERAPIST _____
AGENCY _____

LIFE STYLE CATEGORIES

CATEGORY 1 (LS1): CHANGES IN STATE OF PHYSICAL HEALTH

QUESTION: Have you observed any changes in the state of your physical health since you became separated?

CATEGORY 2 (LS2): CHANGES IN INGESTIVE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

QUESTION: Since you and your spouse separated, have there been any changes in your ingestive behavior patterns?

CATEGORY 3 (LS3): CHANGES IN HANDLING OF FINANCIAL MATTERS

QUESTION: What change, if any, has there been in the way you are handling money matters?

CATEGORY 4 (LS4): CHANGES IN PERSONAL AND/OR HOUSEHOLD MAINTENANCE TASKS

QUESTION: Have there been changes in the tasks you do to keep up your person and your home?

CATEGORY 5 (LS5): CHANGES IN PARENTAL (CHILD-REARING RELATED) ACTIVITIES

QUESTION: What changes have there been in your behavior as it relates to your children?

CATEGORY 6 (LS6): CHANGES IN SOCIAL OR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

QUESTION: What changes, if any, have you made in your social or recreational life?

CATEGORY 7 (LS7): CHANGES IN RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

QUESTION: What effects has your being separated had on your religious life?

CATEGORY 8 (LS8): CHANGES IN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

QUESTION: What changes in your sexual behavior have occurred since you separated from your husband (wife)?

CATEGORY 9 (LS9): CHANGES IN VOCATION-ORIENTED BEHAVIOR

QUESTION: Have any changes occurred that relate to what you do for a living?

CATEGORY 10 (LS10): CHANGES IN UTILIZATION OF OUTER RESOURCES

QUESTION: Whom are you using for support or help since you separated?

Is this new behavior for you?

CATEGORY 11 (LS11): BEHAVIOR ORIENTATION--REALITY VIS-A-VIS AVOIDANCE

QUESTION: Has your behavior become more reality-oriented or more avoidance-oriented in separation?

IDENTITY CATEGORIES

CATEGORY 12 (ID1): FREEDOM IN TENSION WITH BONDAGE

QUESTION: Do you see yourself as more free right now than you were when you and your wife (husband) were together, or do you see yourself as more bound?

CATEGORY 13 (ID2): DESIRE FOR DISTANCE IN TENSION WITH DESIRE FOR CLOSENESS

QUESTION: Since you separated, do you feel like you want more distance from people than before, or do you feel you'd like to be closer to others than before?

CATEGORY 14 (ID3): TRANSITORINESS IN TENSION WITH SETTLEDNESS

QUESTION: Do you think you have settled into the separated state pretty well, or do you feel like it's a transitory thing--a sort of limbo state?

CATEGORY 15 (ID4): INNER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN TENSION WITH TOTAL RELIANCE ON OUTER RESOURCES

QUESTION: Where do you see yourself as concentrating more energy these days--on developing your own inner resources, or on finding help outside yourself?

CATEGORY 16 (ID5): INTACT, STABLE IDENTITY IN TENSION WITH IDENTITY DIFFUSION

QUESTION: Speaking as a separated spouse, I'd like you to respond in any way you want to to the question 'Who is (subject's name)?'; in other words, how would you answer the question 'Who am I?' right now?

CATEGORY 17 (ID6): DEPRESSION IN TENSION WITH ELATION

QUESTION: Would you characterize yourself as more depressed since you separated, or would you say you are more elated--happier?

CATEGORY 18 (ID7): MISTRUST IN TENSION WITH TRUSTFULNESS

QUESTION: Do you think you are more distrustful towards people in general now that you're separated? Or have you become more trustful?

CATEGORY 19 (ID8): ANXIETY IN TENSION WITH RELAXATION

QUESTION: Would you say you are a more relaxed person now that you are separated from your husband (wife), or are you a more anxious person?

CATEGORY 20 (ID9): SELF-RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE IN TENSION WITH A BLAMING ATTITUDE

QUESTION: Who, if anybody, is responsible for where you find yourself right now?

CATEGORY 21 (ID10): GROWTH MOTIVATION: THE PUSH OF PAIN IN TENSION WITH THE PULL OF GROWTH

QUESTION: At this point, what drives you to keep working at your own growth? Is it more because you want to get

out of a painful spot, or more because you have an inner picture of whom you'd like to become and that dream lures you on?

CATEGORY 22 (ID11): THE COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP: INTENSIFICATION
VIS-A-VIS DECREASED INTEREST

QUESTION: Has your involvement with (counselor's name) changed in importance to you since you are separated?

CATEGORY 23 (ID12): PERSONAL GOALS: CHANGE VIS-A-VIS NO CHANGE

QUESTION: As a separated person, have you made any changes in your personal goals?

MISCELLANEOUS ADDENDAE (NOT TAPED)

APPENDIX B

MASTER CHART FOR DATA CODING AND TABULATION: LIFE STYLE CATEGORIES

LIFE STYLE CATEGORIES:

KEY TO +/0/- SYMBOLS:
UPPER SYMBOLS (HEAVY INK)
..RESEARCHER/CODER
LOWER SYMBOLS (LIGHT INK)
..INTER-CODER

		Changes in state of physical health (symptoms)?	Changes in ingestive behavior patterns?	Changes in handling of financial matters?	Changes in personal and/or household maintenance tasks?
		LS1 (1) + more healthy 0 = no change - less healthy	LS2 (2) + positive 0 = no change - negative	LS3 (3) + more conservative 0 = no change - more liberal	LS4 (4) + more ingoing 0 = no change - more ingoing
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA					
1	F1 MP, age 24, married 4 yrs., 1 child age 2. Separated 3½ weeks at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	0	+	+	+
2	(S1)	0	+	+	+
3	F2 DM, age 22, married 3 yrs., 1 child age 2½. Separated 12 weeks at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	+	+	+	-
4	(S2)	+	+	+	-
5	F3 PL, age 32, married 10 yrs., 2 children age 7, 4. Sep. 2 weeks at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	-	-	-	-
6	(S3)	-	-	-	-
7	F4 ES, age 30, married 10 yrs., 2 children age 9, 8. Sep. 6 weeks at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	-	-	+	+
8	(S4)	-	-	+	+
9	F5 CL, age 41, married 23 yrs., 4 children ages 20, 19, 13, 8. Sep. 3 wks. at int. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	-	-	+	-
10	(S5)	-	-	+	-
11	F6 NM, age 36, married 21 yrs., 3 children ages 20, 16, 14. Sep. 6 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GRL Agency: ICS	+	+	0	0
12	(S6)	+	+	0	+
13	F7 SM, age 33, married 13 yrs., 2 children ages 11, 8. Sep. 13 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	0	-	-	0
14	(S7)	0	-	-	0
15	F8 RG, age 43, married 22 yrs., 5 children ages 21, 20, 17, 14, 13. Sep. 12 wks. at int. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	+	+	+	-
16	(S8)	+	+	+	-
17	F9 PA, age 33, married 13 yrs., 2 children ages 7, 3. Sep. 6½ wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	-	-	+	+
18	(S9)	-	-	+	+
19	F10 ST, age 25, married 4 yrs., 1 child age ½. Separated 4 weeks at interview. Thpst.: JRL Agency: ICS	+	+	-	0
20	(S10)	+	+	-	0
21	M1 BP, age 28, married 4 yrs., 1 child age 2. Separated 3½ weeks at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	-	-	+	+
22	(S11)	-	-	+	+
23	M2 JL, age 32, married 10 yrs., 2 children ages 7, 4. Sep. 2 wks. at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	-	-	-	+
24	(S12)	-	-	-	+
25	M3 RS, age 32, married 10 yrs., 2 children ages 9, 8. Sep. 6 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	-	-	-	+
26	(S13)	-	-	-	+
27	M4 BM, age 40, married 21 yrs., 3 children ages 20, 16, 14. Sep. 6 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GRL Agency: ICS	-	-	-	+
28	(S14)	-	-	-	+
29	M5 MC, age 25, married 3 yrs., 1 child age 1. Sep. 3 weeks at interview. Thpst.: GRL Agency: ICS	+	+	-	+
30	(S15)	+	+	-	+
31	M6 DM, age 38, married 13 yrs., 2 children ages 11, 8. Sep. 13 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	-	-	-	+
32	(S16)	-	-	-	+
33	M7 BM, age 23, married 5 yrs., 1 child age ½. Separated 1 week at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	-	-	+	+
34	(S17)	-	-	+	+
35	M8 RG, age 43, married 22 yrs., 5 children ages 21, 20, 17, 14, 13. Sep. 12 wks. at int. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	-	-	+	+
36	(S18)	-	-	+	+
37	M9 LF, age 27, married 5 yrs., 1 child age 3½. Separated 4 weeks at interview. Thpst.: JRL Agency: ICS	-	-	-	+
38	(S19)	-	-	-	+
39	M10 FT, age 29, married 4 yrs., 1 child age ½. Separated 4 weeks at interview. Thpst.: JRL Agency: ICS	-	-	+	+
40	(S20)	-	-	+	+
41		F: 4+ 20 4-	5+ 00 5-	6+ 10 3-	3+ 30 4-
42		M: 1+ 00 9-	1+ 00 9-	4+ 00 6-	10+ 00 0-
43		TOTAL: 5+ 20 13-	6+ 00 14-	10+ 10 9-	13+ 30 4-

94	00	11-	5-	34	00	7-	7+	10	2-	1+	00	9-	9+	00	1-	7+	20	1-	4+	60	1-	16+	00	4-
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APPENDIX C

MASTER CHART FOR DATA CODING AND TABULATION: IDENTITY CATEGORIES

IDENTITY CATEGORIES:

KEY TO +/0/- SYMBOLS:
UPPER SYMBOLS (HEAVY INK)
..RESEARCHER/CODER
LOWER SYMBOLS (LIGHT INK)
..INTER-CODER

IDENTITY CATEGORIES:		BOND-AGE		DESIRE FOR DISTANCE		DESIRE FOR CLOSENESS		TRANSITORINESS		SETTLEDNESS		INNER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT		TOTAL RELIANCE ON OUTER RESOURCES		DATE
		FREEDOM	AGE													
KEY TO +/0/- SYMBOLS: UPPER SYMBOLS (HEAVY INK) ..RESEARCHER/CODER LOWER SYMBOLS (LIGHT INK) ..INTER-CODER																
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA																
LINE NO.	ID	DESCRIPTION	+ more free	0 in-definite	- bound	+ distance	0 in-definite	- closeness	+ transitory	0 in-definite	- settled	+ inner	0 in-definite	- outer		
1	F1	MP, age 24, married 4 yrs., 1 child age 2. Separated 3½ weeks at interview. Thpst.: HWS. Agency: ICS	+			+			+			+				
2	(S1)		+			+			+			+				
3	F2	DM, age 22, married 3 yrs., 1 child age 2½. Separated 12 weeks at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	+					-	+			+				
4	(S2)		+					-	+			+				
5	F3	PL, age 32, married 10 yrs., 2 children age 7, 4. Sep. 2 weeks at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	+					-	+						-	
6	(S3)		+					-	+							
7	F4	ES, age 30, married 10 yrs., 2 children age 9, 8. Sep. 6 weeks at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	+				0		+			+				
8	(S4)		+				0		+			+				
9	F5	CL, age 41, married 23 yrs., 4 children ages 20, 19, 13, 8. Sep. 3 wks. at int. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS			-		0		+						-	
10	(S5)				-		0		+						-	
11	F6	NM, age 36, married 21 yrs., 3 children ages 20, 16, 14. Sep. 6 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GRL Agency: ICS	+				0		+			+				
12	(S6)		+				0		+			+				
13	F7	SM, age 33, married 13 yrs., 2 children ages 11, 8. Sep. 13 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS			-			-	+			+				
14	(S7)				-			-	+			+				
15	F8	RG, age 43, married 22 yrs., 5 children ages 21, 20, 17, 14, 13. Sep. 12 wks. at int. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS	+			+			+			+				
16	(S8)		+			+			+			+				
17	F9	PA, age 33, married 13 yrs., 2 children ages 7, 3. Sep. 6½ wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS			-		0		+						-	
18	(S9)				-		0		+						-	
19	F10	ST, age 25, married 4 yrs., 1 child age ½. Separated 4 weeks at interview. Thpst.: JRL Agency: ICS	+				0		+			+				
20	(S10)		+				+		+			+				
21	M1	BP, age 28, married 4 yrs., 1 child age 2. Separated 3½ weeks at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS			-			-	+						-	
22	(S11)				-			-	+						-	
23	M2	JL, age 32, married 10 yrs., 2 children ages 7, 4. Sep. 2 wks. at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	+					-	+			+				
24	(S12)		+					-	+			+				
25	M3	RS, age 32, married 10 yrs., 2 children ages 9, 8. Sep. 6 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS			-			-	+			+				
26	(S13)				-			-	+			+				
27	M4	BM, age 40, married 21 yrs., 3 children ages 20, 16, 14. Sep. 6 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GRL Agency: ICS			-			-	+			+				
28	(S14)				-			-	+			+				
29	M5	MC, age 25, married 3 yrs., 1 child age 1. Sep. 3 weeks at interview. Thpst.: GRL Agency: ICS	+			+			+			+				
30	(S15)		+			+			+			+				
31	M6	DM, age 38, married 13 yrs., 2 children ages 11, 8. Sep. 13 wks. at interview. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS			-			-	+			+				
32	(S16)				-			-	+			+				
33	M7	BM ^c , age 28, married 5 yrs., 1 child age ½. Separated 1 week at interview. Thpst.: HWS Agency: ICS	+					-	+			+				
34	(S17)		+					-	+			+				
35	M8	RG, age 43, married 22 yrs., 5 children ages 21, 20, 17, 14, 13. Sep. 12 wks. at int. Thpst.: GBW Agency: ICS			-	+			+			+				
36	(S18)				-	+			+			+				
37	M9	LF, age 27, married 5 yrs., 1 child age 3½. Separated 4 weeks at interview. Thpst.: JRL Agency: ICS			-			-	+						-	
38	(S19)				-			-	+						-	
39	M10	FT, age 29, married 4 yrs., 1 child age ½. Separated 4 weeks at interview. Thpst.: JRL Agency: ICS			-			-	+			+				
40	(S20)				-			-	+			+				
41		F:	7+	00	3-	2+	50	3-	10+	00	0-	7+	00	3-		
42		M:	3+	00	7-	2+	00	8-	10+	00	0-	8+	00	2-		
43		TOTAL:	10+	00	10-	4+	50	11-	20+	00	0-	15+	00	5-		

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